

Hafa Adai!

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EDA tentatively approves \$10M for NMTI. **PAGE 4**

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Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXX, Issue No. 2

www.saipantribune.com

MONDAY JANUARY 6, 2020

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DHS issues warning bulletin

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

Following a U.S.-led drone attack that killed a ranking Iranian military commander last Jan. 2, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security issued a bulletin last Saturday, warning of possible cyberattacks against the U.S. that is masterminded by Iran.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres assured that the CNMI government continues to monitor, in collaboration with federal partners, any and all threats to the U.S. homeland and in the Marianas.

The DHS National Terrorism Advisory System Bulletin, which was updated Saturday, expires on Jan.

See DHS on Page 4



JUSTINE NAUTA

DAY TOUR

Passengers head back to the *Costa Atlantica* after a day tour of Saipan last Jan. 3. **Story on Page 6**

Trump: Aim of killing Iranian general was to 'stop a war'



Trump

By ROBERT BURNS, LOLITA C. BALDOR and ZEKE MILLER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Donald Trump said Friday he ordered the killing of a top Iranian general “to stop a war,” not start one, but in the tense aftermath the Pentagon braced

RELATED NEWS

- US-Iran tensions thrust foreign policy into Democrats' race. **PAGE 14**
- Soleimani's body arrives in Iran as Trump issues new threats. **PAGE 16**

for retaliation by sending more troops to the Middle East. Democrats complained that Trump hadn't consulted

Congress, and some worried that the strike made war more likely.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo

argued the U.S. case with allies in the Middle East and beyond, asserting

See TRUMP on Page 4

Near drowning at the Grotto

A woman nearly drowned at the Grotto dive site in Marpi last Thursday, Jan. 2, but witnesses managed to pull her out of the water and she did not have to be resuscitated. She refused to be confined at the hospital and was later released.

A report from the CNMI Department of Public Safety states that DPS received a 911 call last Thursday at about 9:37am about a drowning incident at the Grotto dive site. Police and medics were dispatched

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NMTI board is dissolved

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The Northern Marianas Trades Institute board of directors unanimously agreed last Friday to dissolve itself to make room for the creation of a board of trustees, pursuant to the law that

declared the NMTI a government institution.

NMTI board chair John Oliver Gonzales has confirmed that the NMTI board adopted last Friday a board resolution where they essentially gave their consent to dissolve

See NMTI on Page 4

INSIDE



BUSINESS

Guam Sports Events, Inc. unveils its limited edition 2020 training T-shirt.

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FOCUS

After Friday's killing of Qassem Soleimani, the question was: Was it an assassination?

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LIFE & STYLE

Rose McGowan's tweet that apologized to Iran was not anti-American, the actress said.

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Local

Man gets 46 months in prison for stealing judge's gun

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

The federal court slapped Friday an imprisonment sentence of three years and 10 months against a habitual offender who burglarized the house of Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo and stole the judge's gun, among other items.

After serving his sentence, Cling Philip Kaipat will be immediately placed on three years of supervised release, said U.S. District Court for the

NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona.

As part of his supervised release, Kaipat must refrain from drinking any alcoholic beverages and using a controlled substance. He is also required to participate in a mental health treatment program and substance abuse treatment program, and must take all mental health medications prescribed by the treating physician.

Manglona said the defendant must stay away from Govendo, his immediate fami-

ly members, and his residence.

The 23-year-old Kaipat was ordered to perform 50 hours of community service, but this condition shall be suspended if he is employed. He was ordered to immediately pay \$100 in special assessment fee.

Manglona granted assistant U.S. attorney Garth Backe's motion to dismiss the remaining charge against Kaipat as part of the plea deal.

Backe appeared at the hearing as counsel for the U.S. government. U.S. probation

officer Gregory Arriola also appeared in court.

Kaipat and his court-appointed counsel, Colin Thompson, as well as psychologist Dr. Ashley Christiansen, appeared from the U.S. mainland via video teleconference. Kaipat is currently in a medical center in the U.S. mainland.

Manglona found Kaipat competent to proceed in the criminal proceeding. The judge also entered a finding that the defendant suffers from a mental disease of schizophrenia, but will proceed to sentencing.

Backe informed the court that there are no legal victims in this matter, but that he was in communication with Govendo regarding the knife that was among the items stolen. Backe said the knife will be returned to Saipan to its rightful owner. The minutes of the hearing did not provide more details about the knife.

Kaipat spoke in court before Manglona handed down the sentence.

With respect to Kaipat's separate conviction in the Superior Court case arising from

the same burglary, the Office of the Attorney General and the Department of Corrections have agreed to relinquish their jurisdiction over Kaipat.

Last March, Manglona ordered an additional 120 days for Kaipat's further treatment and evaluation in the U.S. Medical Center for Federal Prisoners in the mainland. Kaipat was committed to MCFP on Jan. 23, 2017.

Manglona initially found Kaipat mentally incompetent to understand the nature and consequences of the proceedings against him or to assist properly in his defense.

On May 19, 2017, the MCFP issued a certificate of competency, establishing that Kaipat was mentally competent to permit the proceedings to move forward.

In April 2018, Manglona ordered another psychiatric or psychological examination because Kaipat's competency was questionable.

Following a competency hearing on Aug. 10, 2018, Manglona again found the defendant mentally incompetent. The judge then committed him to the custody of the U.S.

Attorney General for hospitalization and treatment.

In November 2017, Kaipat pleaded guilty in federal court to possession of a stolen firearm.

According to the factual basis of the plea agreement, on Nov. 5, 2015, Kaipat possessed a stolen 9mm Smith and Wesson pistol. Kaipat knew the pistol was stolen because he stole it while burglarizing Govendo's home on Saipan.

In that burglary, he also stole a watch, a hunting knife, and \$500 in U.S. currency. Govendo was off-island when the burglary happened.

In the Superior Court case, Kaipat also pleaded guilty to burglary and theft as part of a plea deal. In November 2016, Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio sentenced him to a total of six years in prison. The six-year prison sentence, however, will run concurrently with the sentence in Kaipat's conviction in federal court's case. It means that he will serve the six years in prison within whatever prison term the District Court will impose on him.



TRADITIONAL DRUMMERS

A traditional Japanese group performs at Christmas in the Marianas on Dec. 21, 2019, at Paseo de Marianas on Saipan.

MVA



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IN DOUBLE HOMICIDE

Still no autopsy, no arrest

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

It's been over three weeks since two women were shot dead inside a restaurant in San Antonio, yet no autopsy has been conducted on the victims' bodies and no arrest has been made.

When asked for an update about the Dec. 13 double homicide, Office of the Attorney General information officer Carla Torres said over the weekend that they have no timeframe as to when to arrange the autopsy on the victims.

Torres said Attorney General Edward Manibusan will advise when their office has an agreement with a medical examiner who will conduct the autopsy.

"I'll be in touch," Torres said.

The CNMI and even Guam have problems as to who will conduct autopsies in both jurisdictions after Guam chief medical examiner Dr. Aurelio Espinola retired in January 2019.

An autopsy will determine the cause and manner of a person's death.

The medical examiner must certify that the death of a person was the result of a criminal act. Police investigation, which is supported by scientific evidence to corroborate the facts, will establish that the crime of murder was committed.

The Department of Public Safety said it is the OAG that has been coordinating the process to get a medical examiner for the autopsy.

Li Na Lim, 43, and Linhua Cui, 53, were found dead inside the Rice Cake Best Food Restaurant in the morning of Dec. 13 after they were reportedly shot by still unidentified person/s.

A source said robbery was the likely motive behind the killing. Although there has been no official word on how they were killed, multiple *Saipan Tribune* sources said they were shot.

Police found out that the victims' shoulder bags could not be found at the crime scene.

Saipan Tribune learned that Lim used to work as a tour guide for Expo Tour, then she moved to another tour agency.

A year ago, Lim put up a company that took over the operation of Rice Cake Best Food Restaurant after the previous owner moved back to South Korea.

Cui was among the pioneer garment factory workers on Saipan. She worked for a long time as a baker at Paris Croissant in western Garapan. Cui helped Lim in running the Rice

Cake Best Food Restaurant.

The NMI Crime Stoppers Program is offering up to \$1,000 cash reward to anyone who can provide information that will

lead to the arrest of the killer/s.

Based on police records, Friday's fatal shooting in San Antonio is the fifth double homicide on Saipan since 1995,

all of them involving Chinese nationals. All cases remain unsolved so far.

Although one of the victim, Li Na Lim, is a Korean

national, the second victim, Linhua Cui, is of Chinese-Korean descent.

DPS spokesman Adrian Pangelinan earlier said that

cold cases do not have a statute of limitation. "So if there is a new lead or new information on the case, DPS re-opens the case," he had said.



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EDA tentatively approves \$10M for NMTI

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The Northern Marianas Trades Institute has reportedly been tentatively approved by the U.S. Economic Development Administration for a \$10-million grant that would go to the construction of a new campus.

NMTI board chair John Gonzales said a few requirements are still needed to fully release the funding to the institution.

"We've overcome the initial vetting and we're tentatively approved for our grant application. I would like to say we're excited," he said.

According to Gonzales, the new campus will be built on a public land by the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

"We're excited and we can't wait to move to our new campus soon after the grant is approved and the construction is done," he said.

According to *Saipan Tri-*

bune archives, the only requirement that EDA is waiting on is a report from the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Historic Preservation Office to ensure that no bird breeding grounds are bothered and that there are no burial grounds that could be disturbed.

NMTI chief executive officer Agnes McPhetres said that NMTI wants a new campus because the current one is flood-prone.

"We're going to moving

away from here because this is a flood zone. When it rains, we need to watch if the water is coming in. We tried everything we could to get the water out [but it's] not a good facility. It's not adequate for a trade school. It's OK when you're starting off," she said.

NMTI is also working on applying for other federal grants aside from the EDA grant for the construction of dormitories to house local students from Rota and Tinian.

NMTI

From Page 1

the board pursuant to Public Law 20-92 that established the Northern Marianas Technical Institute and recognized NMTI as a government entity.

"...We are dissolving, so that will pave the way for the new board of trustees for the newly created Northern Marianas Technical Institute to take over the governance responsibilities and fiduciary role and also the transfer of assets," he said.

Gonzales said the board of trustees, composed of seven individuals confirmed by the CNMI Senate, would officially meet today.

"The new board of trustees will meet on Monday to essentially create a new bank account and start the essential administrative manner," he said.

Gonzales said the dissolution of the board is bittersweet but they are excited for what's to come with the newly established board of trustees.



From left to right, Annie Hayes, John Oliver Gonzales, Agnes McPhetres, Joe Torres, and Richard Kautz, pose for a photo following the adoption of a resolution for the dissolution of the Northern Marianas Trades Institute board of directors last Friday.

KIMBERLY BAUTISTA

"We're welcoming the new year with a lot of promise and opportunities ahead of us. The old board of directors would like to look back and say it's been an awesome four to five years, through thick and thin, and trials and tribulations. We have no one else to thank but the administration and the Legislature for being equally being supportive of our role

and growth," he said.

Two members of the outgoing board will transition into the board of trustees, Richard P. Kautz Jr. and Mario Valentino. The outgoing board members who will not make the transition into the board of trustees are Gonzales, Annie G. Hayes, and Joseph Torres but Gonzales assured that he, Joe Torres, and Annie Hayes "stand ready

to assist as necessary."

Also part of the new board of trustees are Irene Holl, Carmela Faisao, and Ray Pangelinan. Two members have yet to be confirmed.

That means the NMTI board of trustees will be private-sector driven and "we're excited for the new board of trustees moving forward," said Gonzales.

TRUMP

From Page 1

that Friday's drone strike killing Gen. Qassem Soleimani was a necessary act of self defense. He asserted that Soleimani was plotting a series of attacks that endangered many American troops and officials across the Middle East.

The ramifications of Trump's decision to kill Soleimani were still coming into focus Friday; they could include an end to the U.S. military partnership with Iraq in fighting the Islamic State extremist group. Some Iraqi politicians called the attack, which also killed an Iraqi general, a violation of Iraqi sovereignty and questioned whether U.S. forces should be expelled. The U.S. has about 5,200 troops in Iraq, mostly to train and advise Iraqi forces fighting IS.

In brief remarks to the nation, Trump said the Iranian general had been plotting "imminent and sinister" attacks. At the Pentagon, Army Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the U.S. had "compelling, clear,

unambiguous intelligence" of Soleimani plotting violent acts.

"Oh, by the way, it might still happen," Milley said, referring to the planned attacks.

Trump called Soleimani a ruthless figure who "made the death of innocent people his sick passion. ... We take comfort in knowing that his reign of terror is over."

The president warned Iran against retaliating. He said the U.S. military has Iranian targets "fully identified" for counter-retaliation. The U.S. has a wide range of offensive and defensive forces in the Gulf area within range of Iran.

Asked about possible retaliation, Milley told reporters, "Is there risk? You're damn right there's risk." He added, "There is a range of possible futures here, and the ball is in the Iranian court."

As Iran warned of "harsh" reprisals, the U.S. Homeland Security Department watched for trouble brewing on the domestic front and reported "no specific, credible threats" in the first hours after the American attack in Baghdad, said the department's acting secretary, Chad F. Wolf.

Senior State Department officials, in a briefing for reporters, said the drone strike near the Baghdad international airport was based on intelligence that suggested Soleimani was traveling in the area to put final touches on plans for attacks that would have hit U.S. diplomats, troops and American facilities in Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and elsewhere in the Mideast. The officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity under State Department ground rules, would not be more specific about the intelligence but said it clearly called for a decisive U.S. response.

Democrats in Congress questioned the administration's approach, while making clear they don't regret Soleimani's demise. Sen. Mark Warner, a Virginia Democrat, noted that Pompeo said the administration wants to "de-escalate" tensions with Iran.

"I think the jury's out on that," Warner said. "I hope they're successful on that. I think it could have brought in more congressional leaders and allies to help make that case ahead of time."

Rep. Adam Schiff, a Califor-

nia Democrat, said he has not heard a satisfactory explanation for the timing of the U.S. attack.

"And the question is why the administration chose this moment, why this administration made the decision to remove him from the battlefield and other administrations, both parties, decided that would escalate the risks, not reduce them," he said.

Fears about the repercussions of killing Soleimani persisted throughout the administrations of President George W. Bush, a Republican, and President Barack Obama, a Democrat, according to officials who served under both. Soleimani, they calculated, was just as dangerous dead and martyred as he was alive and plotting against Americans.

A decades-long U.S. nemesis, Iran holds a range of options for striking back, militarily or otherwise. Tens of thousands of American troops in the Persian Gulf area, including in Iraq and Qatar, are within easy range of Iranian missiles, and Iran has the capability to act more clandestinely with cyber attacks or military proxy strikes on U.S. targets abroad.

DHS

From Page 1

18 or earlier.

Acting Homeland Security secretary Chad F. Wolf issued the advisory in the wake of the U.S.-led airstrike in Iraq that killed the head of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps-Quds Force, Qassem Soleimani. The DHS bulletin states that the Iranian leadership and several violent extremist organizations have publicly stated they intend to retaliate against the United States.

The bulletin warns that "Iran maintains a robust cyber program and can execute cyberattacks against the United States. Iran is capable, at a minimum, of carrying out attacks with temporary disruptive effects against critical infrastructure in the United States."

Although it says there is no information indicating a specific, credible threat to the United States at this time, it warned that "Iran and its partners...have demonstrated the intent and capability to conduct operations in the United States" and that "Iranian leadership and several affiliated violent extremist organizations publicly stated they intend to retaliate against the United States."

The advisory also states that "Homegrown Violent Extremists could capitalize on the heightened tensions to launch individual attacks" and that "an attack in the homeland may come with little or no warning."

Wolf, however, maintained that there is no specific, credible threat against the United States at present, and that the bulletin is to "reassure the American public, state and local governments, and private sector partners that the Department of Homeland Security is actively monitoring and preparing for any specific, credible threat, should one arise."

When sought for comments, Torres said his admin-

TYPES OF ADVISORIES

Bulletin

Describes current developments or general trends regarding threats of terrorism.

Elevated Alert
Warns of a credible terrorism threat against the United States.

Imminent Alert
Warns of a credible, specific and impending terrorism threat against the United States.

istration constantly receives updates from the White House and DHS on the situation in the Middle East.

"The safety and security of every American and residents who call the Marianas home are primary priorities, and we will continue to join the rest of the nation in assessing potential threats to our islands and our homeland," Torres added.

DHS assures the public that they are working with federal, state, local, and private sector partners to detect and defend against any threats, and will enhance security measures as necessary.

The United States designated Iran a "state sponsor of terrorism" in 1984 and accuses it of engaging in or directing "an array of violent and deadly acts against the United States and its citizens globally." The United States designated Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps a foreign terrorist organization on April 15, 2019, "for its direct involvement in terrorist plotting."

NEAR

From Page 1

to the scene, where they met with the caller, who was the on-duty security guard at the time. The security guard stated that one of the divers ran up the steps and called for his attention, and told to him to call 911 to report a drowning.

At the scene police learned that the female victim was trying to cross over to the main rock before the current came in and swept her into the water. The female victim was stuck under water for about a minute before other witnesses saw her head appear above the water. At that time, one of the divers ran up to call for help.

Other witnesses in the area managed to pull the victim out of the water. The victim was responsive and breathing. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation did not have to be performed, but the victim was placed on a spine board and transported to the Commonwealth Health Center, where they were treated for lacerations, abrasions, and bruising. The victim refused to be admitted after treatment.

DPS would like to remind the public to be aware of the water conditions and your surroundings when planning to enjoy the waters at beaches, dive sites or other attractions. DPS encourages the public to call 911 anytime to report an emergency. (Saipan Tribune)

Focus in 2020 is on housing, education, economic recovery

By IVA MAURIN

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REPORTER

Recovery, in terms of housing, education, and the economy, is the focus of the Torres administration this year, according to press secretary Kevin Bautista.

The goal for 2020 is to get people's homes rebuilt, get schools started on reconstruction, and get businesses back up and running, he said in an interview with *Saipan Tribune*.

"Recovery is our top priority, as always," Bautista said. "We have the resources to speed up building, especially now that we have an infusion of 3,000 new [foreign] workers that are now approved for construction, which is something that the governor has...been advocating for since 2018."

The 2020 national appropriations bill, which U.S. President Donald Trump enacted in late December, includes Delegate Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan's (Ind-MP) Disaster Recovery Workforce Act, providing for the CNMI federal funds that would allow an additional 3,000 foreign workers to do typhoon recovery work until 2022.

In December, Federal Emergency Management Agency regional administrator Robert

Fenton said that rebuilding of homes will now be moving a lot faster as they are maximizing the available workforce to speed it up.

Also, elements of the reconstruction that took time are now in the can, including the approved engineering drawings and the construction materials that are now on the island. There are 148 homes under the FEMA repair program, and 178 under its construction program.

With schools, Bautista said the administration of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres has been working with the Northern Marianas College, the CNMI Public School System, and the State Board of Education to ensure the rapid rebuilding of several school campuses around the island, like Hopwood Middle School, NMC, and schools in the south.

The schools have been using tents, approved and agreed upon by the governor, BOE, NMC, and PSS to ensure steady, normal school operations after the typhoon hit the islands.

"Based off of the projections in our conversations with FEMA, and our dialogue on our project worksheets, we are in the process of building facilities for the schools, Hopwood, NMC, and all the other

schools that were affected, rebuild them from the ground up and make them some of the best schools and education facilities in the Pacific," Bautista added.

NMC, for one, was recently awarded \$21.9 million by the U.S. Department of Education, which NMC interim president Frankie Eliptico said would go a long way to assist the college's recovery effort, and in building "modern, state-of-the-art, and resilient buildings and facilities."

As for the economy, the goal is to get businesses back up and running by renewing small business entrepreneurship, attracting new ones, and increasing investor confidence in the Marianas.

According to Bautista, the government wants to ensure that it is easier to do business in the Commonwealth.

"The biggest thing for us is to diversify our overall economy," he said. "It's not just going to be based off the tourism industry and the gaming industry, which essentially is just one industry. It's also ensuring that we ensure the viability of the cannabis industry that we are working on through our [Commonwealth] Cannabis Commission."

CCC has already completed two of the three sections of

the law that they are trying to push out—homegrown and commercial, with the drafting of the regulations for medicinal to begin this year. The commission has until March 20, 2020, to come up with the regulations governing the use, production, and selling of cannabis in the CNMI.

As for tourism, Bautista said the government remains set on revitalizing the Japanese market. Skymark Airlines, Inc. launched in December its first ever regular

international service, which is a non-stop flight connecting Narita, Japan and Saipan.

"[The government] ensures that the Marianas Visitors Authority has the resources that it needs to succeed so we

can continue to promote the Marianas as a first-class, first-choice destination for tourists in not just the China, Japan, and Korea market, but also within the Western Pacific and Asia region," he added.

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Ex-firefighter says his crime haunts him every day of his life

» Benavente asks for his 30-year prison term to be reduced

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE

ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A former firefighter who is serving a 30-year prison term in a federal prison in the U.S. mainland for sexually exploiting two girls, said that his crime haunts him every day of his life.

In a letter to U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona, where he also begged to Manglona to reduce his sentence, Richard Sullivan Benavente said, "I wish the girls are clean and sober and trying to live a normal life."

In the letter that was filed in the District Court last Dec. 30, Benavente, who is currently in prison in New York, apologized to the girls and their family, to the court, and the community, saying he was under the influence of methamphetamine or "ice" at that time and wasn't thinking straight and seeing clearly.

Benavente said he has been "clean" now for almost seven years and that he plans on

staying sober whether he is in prison or not.

"I enjoy being sober," he said, adding that he is learning new tools to handle his problems.

Benavente said he did try to cooperate with Federal Bureau of Investigation special agent Haejun Park and the court's team before, but then let his anger and confusion mess him up.

He said he did not understand the law and should have asked more questions when his case was still pending in court.

The former firefighter said he misses his children and his family. "To think that I won't ever be with them again is so painful," he said.

Benavente said he is still in shock over the 30-year prison term imposed on him. "[It] seems like a lifetime," he said.

He acknowledged that he messed up and deserves to spend some time behind bars and better himself but he also appealed to Manglona to enable him to prove to her, the

people, and his family that he can be a better person.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit declined last April to entertain Benavente's appeal, saying it is a closed case and that his sentence had already been affirmed.

In June 2018, Manglona denied Benavente's request for a review of his case and his sentence.

In October 2017, the Ninth Circuit affirmed the District Court's 30-year prison sentence on Benavente. The Ninth Circuit judges ruled that Manglona did not abuse her discretion in imposing a two-level sentencing enhancement on Benavente.

Manglona concluded that Benavente obstructed justice by lying to the U.S. government and testifying falsely at the trial of another defendant, thereby violating his plea agreement.

Manglona sentenced Benavente in 2016 to the statutory maximum. In 2013, a federal grand jury indicted Benavente on several counts of sexual exploitation of a child.

In 2014, he pleaded guilty to sexual exploitation of a child.



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NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

THIS ADVERTISEMENT IS PAID FOR BY NMHC WITH CPD FUNDS.

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, through the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) is announcing the availability of an **estimated** \$1,323,285.00 in Community Planning and Development (CPD) funds available from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. NMHC anticipates receiving an estimated amount of \$867,556.00 in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG); \$386,617.00 in Home Investment Partnerships (HOME); and, \$69,112.00 in Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds for Program Year (PY) 2020.

The CDBG funds, authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, may be used for a wide range of community development activities to revitalize neighborhoods, provide affordable housing, expand economic opportunities, and improve community facilities and services. However, use of these funds must meet at least one of the national objectives which include: 1) to benefit low and moderate-income families; 2) to eliminate slum or blight conditions; or 3) to meet other urgent community development needs.

The CDBG program requires a grant recipient to certify that it will minimize displacement of persons as a result of activities assisted with CDBG funds. The CNMI government does not plan on undertaking any activity which will cause displacement of person. In the event of any unforeseen displacement resulting from any CDBG funded activity, the CNMI government will comply with the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, its implementing regulation and applicable local law.

HOME funds may be used to create affordable housing through financing assistance, site acquisition or improvement, and rehabilitating existing residential dwellings as well as providing funds for new construction or purchase of a single family residential dwelling. Use of HOME funds must benefit low-income families.

ESG funds may be used to rehabilitate or convert to buildings into homeless shelters and for shelter operating expenses, supportive services and homeless prevention **and rapid re-housing** activities. Use of ESG funds must benefit the homeless.

Applications for the use of CPD funds are available for pick up at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) located in Garapan, Saipan; San Jose Village, Tinian; and, Songsong Village, Rota, beginning November 14, 2019. You may also obtain the application online at www.nmhc.gov.net in the section titled "Public Notice/Announcement" subsection "Community Planning Development"

Applications must be submitted to the NMHC Offices in Garapan, Saipan (Saipan Residents); San Jose, Tinian (Tinian Residents); and, Songsong Village, Rota (Rota Residents) by **March 31, 2020, no later than 4:30 p.m. Applications submitted after March 31, 2020, will not be accepted.**

A briefing will be conducted for interested applicants and for those applicants who have picked up an application for the use of CPD funds. The briefing will address the program requirements and regulations concerning the usage of CPD funds.

The schedules for briefing are as follows:

February 12, 2020, 6:00 p.m. for the island of Tinian
February 13, 2020, 6:00 p.m. for the island of Saipan
February 14, 2020, 6:00 p.m. for the island of Rota

We are encouraging all non-profit, for profit, and government service providers who are providing services to people with disabilities, homeless individuals, and emergency shelter administrators and operators to attend this briefing.

For residents living on the island of Saipan, the briefing will be held at the NMHC Office in Garapan; Residents living on the island of Tinian, the briefing will be held at the NMHC Office in San Jose Village; and Residents living on the island of Rota, the briefing will be held at the Rota Mayor's Office Conference Room in Tatachog.

Accommodations for disabled individuals or other non-English speaking individuals who wish to attend the briefing are available upon request by giving at least 24 hours notice prior to the meeting so that such needs can be arranged and provided. Additional inquiries, concerning the CPD program, may be directed to Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director or Ms. Tricia Tenorio, Planner at 234-6866 or 234-9447.

/s/
Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director

AFTER NEARLY 30 YEARS OF SERVICE

USCG decommissions *Washington* cutter in Guam

SANTA RITA, Guam—The U.S. Coast Guard cutter *Washington Island*, a 110-foot Island Class patrol boat, was decommissioned after nearly 30 years of service as part of recapitalization efforts during a ceremony at Naval Base Guam last Dec. 18.

Rear Adm. Kevin E. Lunday, commander, Coast Guard 14th District, presided over the ceremony. *Washington's* years of service included numerous law enforcement cases, safety and security enforcement patrols, dignity and Naval security operations, and a variety of noteworthy rescues at sea.

"The ship and its crews have been vital to building and maintaining relationships here with our partners and the people of Oceania also known as the Blue Pacific," said Lt. Grant Rutter, commanding officer of *Washington*. "We've been an integral part of the Coast Guard's long-term commitment to Guam and the Commonwealth of the North-



U.S. COAST GUARD/ PETTY OFFICER 3RD CLASS MATTHEW WEST

The crew of the Coast Guard cutter *Washington Island* patrols off Palau during Operation Kurukuru, Oct. 7, 2019.

second cutter to bear the name of our first president. The first, USRC (U.S. Revenue Cutter) *Washington*, performed nobly during the Second Seminole War from 1835-1837 and began the long tradition of excellence still embodied by the ship and crew today. The ship's motto is "our cause is noble."

Washington's crew supports multi-mission operations throughout Sector Guam's vast area of responsibility. This area consists of the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zones surrounding Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Additionally, they conduct international missions throughout the waters of the Republic of Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia, specifically conducting search

and rescue response missions and maritime law enforcement operations. Most recently, they patrolled Palau's EEZ as part of the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency Operation Kurukuru, a coordinated maritime surveillance operation. The goal of the annual operation is to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. *Washington's* long-term efforts to improve maritime governance within the region have advanced a rules-based order and improved freedom of navigation.

Some of the crew will remain permanently stationed in Guam and crew the fast response cutters. The first of three, the USCGC *Myrtle Hazard*, is due to arrive in mid-2020.

Washington is one of the 49 Island Class cutters built to replace the 95-foot Cape Class cutters. With a 16 to 18-person mixed-gender crew and an operating range exceeding 2,300 miles, it has been a successful platform to conduct search and rescue response, ports waterways and coastal security operations, and to enforce the laws and treaties of the United States. The U.S. State Department is coordinating the transfer of *Washington* through the Foreign Assistance Act. This act allows the transfer of excess defense articles as a grant to friendly, foreign governments. (USCG)

Cruise ship *Costa Atlantica* drops by Saipan

Passengers aboard *Costa Atlantica* disembark from the cruise ship for a day tour of Saipan last Jan. 3.

JUSTINE NAUTA

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The cruise ship *Costa Atlantica* dropped anchor on Saipan last Jan. 3 to give its passengers a day to tour of the island and to restock on the ship's supplies and refuel.

As the passengers made their way to shuttle buses at the Port of Saipan in Puerto Rico, they were welcomed by a group of male indigenous dancers who performed to various local songs.

According to Gordon I Marciano of Pacific Development Inc., whose company handled the logistics of the cruise ship's Saipan stop-over, with the speedy clearance of Customs and Border Protection and the help of the CNMI's Ports Police, they assisted the guest to make sure they were all safely on board their shuttle buses,

private transportation, and/or taxis.

The guest took advantage of this stop to tour around the island, swim at Micro Beach in Garapan, or go jogging around American Memorial Park in Garapan.

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC, T Galleria, and Top Development Inc. provided shuttle buses to passengers who wanted to tour the island until it was time to leave for their next destination, Shanghai. The group of entertainers performed one more time as the passengers of the cruise made their way back to the vessel. The guests also received gift bags from the community.

The *Costa Atlantica* is on a 50-day voyage cruise with stops in French Polynesia, Micronesia, Japan, and then China, according to Marciano. This was their third visit and, hopefully, not their last,



JUSTINE NAUTA

A group of male indigenous dancers perform to various local songs to welcome the cruise ship *Costa Atlantica* after it dropped anchor on Saipan last Jan. 3.

he said.

"*Ghilisoow yan si yu'us ma'ase* to our partners in the tourism industry, from [the

Marianas Visitors Authority], [Commonwealth Ports Authority], Saiship, T-Galleria, Saipan Stevedore crew, [Cus-

toms and Border Protection] and all first responders present for all the ground support," said Marciano.

DCCA's holds 1st leadership meeting of 2020

The Department of Community and Cultural Affairs held its first leadership meeting of 2020 last Jan. 3, with the department welcoming the new DCCA resident director on Rota, Dwayne L. Maratita.

This was Maratita's first opportunity to participate in the leadership meeting, which gave him a chance to talk to all the division and program heads about the needs of Rota and how each of the divisions can work together to bring more services to Rota.

According to DCCAs Secretary Robert H. Hunter, they are figuring out ways to expand programs such as the Respite Care Program to Rota by training volunteers there to carry out the program. There are other problems such as a septic system issue at the Aging Center on Rota. They are still figuring out ways to get funding so that they can address that issue.

Maratita was appointed DCCA's resident director on Rota last Oct. 21, 2019. (Justine Nauta)

Cigarette butts make up most of trash BECQ collected in cleanup

By IVA MAURIN

iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

About 250 lbs of trash was collected by volunteers and staff of the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality last Saturday during its Cleanup Brigade's first cleanup activity of the year.

The group of 10 picked up trash from the Carolinian Utt to the Garapan Fishing Base, with cigarette butts making up majority of the trash they collected.

Saipan Southern High School chemistry teacher Roy Adsit, who has been volunteering for years and was part of Saturday's cleanup, appeals to everyone to be responsible for their own trash.

"We love being out here, we love the beach, but it would be really nice if we could come out wander the beach and enjoy the beauty of Saipan trash-free," said Adsit, who has been doing beach cleanups with his students for 19 years, and with SSSH, about 10 years.



Volunteers and staff of the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality picked up about 250 lbs of trash from the Carolinian Utt to the Garapan Fishing Base last Saturday during its Cleanup Brigade's first cleanup activity for the year.

IVA MAURIN

"We've noticed that where you can drive your car, there's more trash, which seems backwards. Seems like if you had

your car right there, you could just throw your trash right in, you can take it away. But it's the opposite where people drive their cars. There's more trash," he noted.

Adsit said he picked up mostly unidentifiable plastic pieces and cigarette butts.

"People come up and they park, which is an ecological disaster. They just sit here and smoke and, instead of putting the cigarette butts in the ash-tray, they just throw them on the ground. They poison ev-

erything around them because cigarettes are full of toxic chemicals," he added.

Adsit also stressed the need for bathrooms, adding that they find too many oddly decomposed feminine hygiene products and piles of partially decomposed tissue paper.

Aside from these, volunteers also picked up beer cans and bottles, fast food wrappers, and used firecrackers.

Zabrina Shai, organizer of the cleanup, expressed appreciation to the volunteers and

to the BECQ Storage Tanks and Site Assessment Remediation Branch for hosting the cleanup.

"Together, we make a difference," Shai said. "Let us all be litter-free, CNMI. If you see trash, pick it up."

The BECQ Cleanup Brigade meets every first Saturday of the month, at 8am, to clean up a pre-chosen location for two hours. If you want to volunteer, or for more information about volunteering, contact the BECQ office at 664-8500/1.

Water service interruptions set

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. would like to inform the public that there is a scheduled water service interruption for customers in As Matuis, San Roque, Tanapag, Achugao, and Lower Base.

The scheduled water outages currently in effect are due to low water supply in the As Matuis water tank. Customer is the affected areas will experience a scheduled water outage today, Monday, on Wednesday, and Friday, from 8pm to 5am. Water service is dependent on the tank level.

Over the past two weeks, CUC has continued to perform leak detection in the affected areas to locate possible leak(s) that may be the cause of the low water tank level. Several leaks have been identified and repaired within the last week; however, the amount of water produced from the wells still cannot keep up with the demand on the distribution system. In addition, operators are troubleshooting a down water well to bring it back to service for additional water supply for the As Matuis Tank Service Area to

improve water service hours.

CUC urges customers in these areas to practice water conservation matters and to contact the CUC Customer Call Center to report any leaks for repairs.

CUC continues to work diligently to minimize any inconvenience to its customers. For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor its Facebook page for the latest updates (<https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/>). (PR)

SCA now accepting appointments to 'fix' pets

Animal advocate group Saipan Cares for Animals is now accepting appointments to spay/neuter dogs and cats as a means to control the feral population on Saipan.

The spay/neutering services will be available on the second week of January 2020.

Saipan Cares for Animals is accepting appointments for spay/neuter surgery for dogs and cats on the following dates: Monday, Jan. 6; Friday, Jan. 10; Saturday, Jan. 11; Sunday, Jan. 12; and Monday, Jan. 13.

Getting your animal spayed/

neutered is also called having them "fixed." The increasing population of stray animals on the island is blamed on animals that are not "fixed."

Call 488-2287 or 285-5448 for information and to schedule an appointment.

(Justine Nauta)



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM DR-4235, 4396, 4404-MP
PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION PROGRAM
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950 • Telephone: (670) 664-2374 • Facsimile: (670) 664-2408

ADDENDUM NO. 1 12/19/19 ITB20-GOV-015

This is to notify all potential Bidders that the items contained in this addendum are added to and/or deleted and become part of the specifications and bid documents for the above referenced bid.

- The bid submission has been extended from December 30, 2019 to **January 30, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.**
 - Sealed bids must be marked ITB20-GOV-015 Supply, Construction and Implementation of the CUC Water System Mitigation Project. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascencion Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan no later than 10:00 a.m. ChST January 30, 2020. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than 10:00 a.m. ChST January 30, 2020 and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to a.magofna@dof.gov.mp. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than January 30, 2020 and the bid documents must be received no later than February 10, 2020. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be the cause for rejection of a bid. Bids will be publicly open and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascencion Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan at 10:30 a.m. ChST February 11, 2020. However, if no notices of intent to bid are received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be open at 10:30 a.m. ChST January 30, 2020.
- Revised Scope of Work – Bidders may pick up the revised Scope of Work at the Hazard Mitigation Office, Office of the Governor in Capitol Hill.
- Specification for the Generators – Bidders may pick up the generator specifications at the Hazard Mitigation Office, Office of the Governor in Capitol Hill.
- Revised Bid Schedule – Bidders may pick up the revised Bid Schedule at the Hazard Mitigation, Office, Office of the Governor in Capitol Hill.
- Request for Information – Bidders may pick up the Request for Information at the Hazard Mitigation Office, Office of the Governor in Capitol Hill.
- Notes for revisions in Specifications – Bidders may pick up the notes for revisions in Specifications at the Hazard Mitigation Office, Office of the Governor in Capitol Hill.

All other terms and conditions remain unchanged. Acknowledge receipt of this addendum on the Bid Form. Questions concerning this project addendum shall be directed to Leona Deleon Guerrero in writing by e-mail to ldguerrero@omb.gov.mp or fax to (670) 664-2408.

Virginia C. Villagomez
Governor's Authorized Representative

Francisco C. Aguon, Acting Director
CNMI Procurement and Supply

END OF ADDENDUM NO. 1
Addendum No. 1 for ITB20-GOV-015

MUNICIPAL SCHOLARSHIP OFFICE
Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan
P.O. Box 520059 • San Jose Village • Tinian, MP 96952
E-Mail: tinianscholarship@gmail.com
Telephone: (670) 433-2200
Facsimile: (670) 433-1819

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board hereby gives notice that there will be a Regular Meeting on Friday, January 10, 2020 at 4:30 p.m., at the PM Building, Room 104, San Jose Village Tinian, at the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Office.

AGENDA

- PRELIMINARY**
 - Call to Order
 - Roll Call
 - Adoption of Agenda
 - Adoption of Minutes August 27, 2019 & November 24, 2019
 - PUBLIC COMMENTS**
 - NEW BUSINESS**
 - Review Annual Report (FY 2018-2019)
 - MISCELLANEOUS**
 - SCHEDULE OF NEXT BOARD MEETING**
 - EXECUTIVE SESSION**
 - ADJOURNMENT**
- /s/ Rodney S. Cabarles
Chairman

We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments on the day of the meeting.
Pursuant to 1 CMC section 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time. Individuals with special needs requiring special accommodations, please contact the TMSB office at least 48 hours prior to schedule meeting for assistance.



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) HOMELESS PREVENTION COALITION

PUBLIC NOTICE

DECEMBER 31, 2019

We would like to inform the General Public that CNMI Homeless Prevention Coalition will be conducting a public forum on January 15, 2019, 6:00 p.m. at the Kagman Community Center. The forum will provide information regarding the CNMI Homeless Prevention Coalition's purpose in the community.

The Coalition will also be conducting the CNMI Point-In Time Count on January 25, 2020 for the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. Any interested volunteers may send their information to jjmuna@nmhc.gov.mp or gbliss@dys.gov.mp on or before January 15, 2020, at 9 a.m. The volunteer orientation will be held at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe on January 17, 2020, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and on January 18, 2020, from 9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m. at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Central Office in Garapan.

For all inquiries you may contact Ms. Gennie Bliss at (670)237-1000 or Mr. Jacob Muna at 234-6866/9447.

Earthquake roundup

At 2:45pm on Jan. 4 2020, a report of a 4.6-magnitude earthquake occurred 48 kilometers north-northeast of Agrihan, Northern Mariana Islands. No tsunami warn-

ings or advisories were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center.

At 4:53pm on Dec. 23 2019, a report of a 5.8-magnitude earthquake occurred 234

kilometers north-northeast of Fais, Micronesia. No tsunami warnings or advisories were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center.

At 7:30am on Dec. 23

2019, a report of a 4.9-magnitude earthquake occurred 3 kilometers west-northwest of Agrihan, Northern Marianas Island. No tsunami warnings or advisories were issued by Pacific Tsunami Warning Center.

At 10:11pm on Dec. 19, 2019, a report of a 5.6-magni-

tude earthquake occurred 24 kilometers south-southwest of Agrihan, Northern Marianas Islands. No tsunami warnings or advisories were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center.

At 5:17pm on Dec. 17, 2019, a report of a 4.9-magnitude earthquake occurred

150 kilometers east of Agrihan. No tsunami warnings or advisories were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center.

For more information, contact the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point at 237-8000. *(Saipan Tribune)*



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Navy training in open ocean, Radio Barrigada ASAN, Guam

The U.S. Navy will conduct open-ocean exercises at the following coordinates: 13°26'N/145°08'E and 13°42'N/144°36'E on Jan. 7, from 7am to 4pm. Live fire will be utilized for this training. All vessels are advised to remain clear of a three nautical mile radius of these coordinates.

It is recommended the public, fishermen, and marine tour operators monitor the U.S. Coast Guard broadcast notice to mariners for advisories.

The U.S. Navy will also conduct embassy reinforcement training on Jan. 9 at Radio Barrigada, from 6pm to 11:55pm. These types of trainings are designed to enhance the readiness of military personnel. The public should be advised that this

training will be accompanied by the use of blanks and residents in surrounding areas should not be alarmed if they see or hear increased activity associated with the training. *(PR)*

NAP schedules

The Nutrition Assistance Program Office will be distributing benefits and re-certifying households whose case records end with "1." Following are the schedules for the ensuing days:

Date Day Case Record Ending with:

- Jan. 6, 2020 Monday "3"
- Jan. 7, 2020 Tuesday "4"
- Jan. 8, 2020 Wednesday "5"
- Jan. 9, 2020 Thursday "6"
- Jan. 10, 2020 Friday "7"
- Jan. 13, 2020 Monday "8"
- Jan. 14, 2020 Tuesday "9"
- Jan. 15, 2020 Wednesday "0"

For more information, con-

tact the NAP office at 237-2842 or 237-2843 or visit its Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/nap.cnmi>. *(PR)*

'A Night with the Knights' set

Mount Carmel School's AlumKnight Association invites AlumKnights and community members to the association's fundraising banquet, "Night with the Knights" on Feb. 1, 2020, in the Magellan at the Pacific Islands Club from 6pm to 10pm. This year's event will feature a school yearbook montage, raffle prizes, music, dancing, and the announcement of the 2020 AlumKnight of the Year and the 2020 Class of the Year. Tickets are \$50 per person. AlumKnights interested in purchasing a table for their class and family can contact

Priscilla Dela Cruz at presdelacruz@gmail.com. Tickets are also available at the school's Business Office. *(PR)*

Guam advisory on income tax filing

The Department of Revenue and Taxation in Guam is currently preparing to update its programming and processing systems for the 2020 income tax filing season, which is for tax year 2019. DRT will not be accepting individual or corporate income tax returns for tax year 2019 at this time. We will advise at a later time on an official date when tax returns will be accepted. *(PR)*

Navy training in Dandan-Malojloj, open ocean, Warning Area 517

ASAN, Guam—The U.S.

Navy will conduct training from 11am to 11:55pm on Jan. 6-9 in Dandan-Malojloj.

The U.S. Navy will also conduct live-fire training from 7am to 4pm on Jan 6-10 at Warning Area 517.

The U.S. Navy will conduct open ocean exercises from 10am to 9pm on Jan. 7-8 at the following coordinates: 13°29'N/144°25'E. The public, fishermen, and boat operators are advised to remain clear within five nautical miles of the training area.

These types of trainings are designed to enhance the readiness of military personnel. Residents in surrounding areas should not be alarmed if they see or hear increased activity associated with the training.

It is recommended the public, fishermen, and marine tour operators monitor the U.S. Coast Guard broadcast notice to mariners for advisories. *(PR)*

Ukulele classes at JKPL

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library registration for beginner and intermediate ukulele class is ongoing. It is open to children ages 8 years or older and adults. The total cost for eight class sessions is \$50. Ukulele classes are held at the public library in partnership with ukulele instructor Larry Lee and children. Sessions are set to begin on Jan. 7, 2020, every Tuesday from 4:30pm to 5:30pm.

The JKPL ukulele class is based on "First come; first paid." Students must provide their own ukuleles and a folder to hold music sheets (plastic sheet protectors and a 3-ring binder are recommended). Parents/guardians must sign a liability waiver Form on behalf of their participating children and must adhere to public library policies and procedures. For questions regarding ukulele class, call Celina Foreman or Caitlyn Crisostomo at 235-7315/7322 during regular library hours. Class dates are subject to change, unless otherwise specified. *(PR)*

Kumisión i Fino' Chamoru meeting set

The Kumisión i Fino' Chamoru yan i Fina'ná'guen i Historia yan i Lina'la' i Tao'tao Tãno' (Commission on Chamoru Language and the Teaching of the History and Culture of the Indigenous People of Guam) will hold its first

January monthly meeting on Jan. 9, 2020, Thursday from 12:30pm to 3pm at the Guam Museum conference room, in Hågatña. Call Roland Blas, Kumisión secretary for special accommodations and agenda at 480-4047 or email at rolandblas1973@gmail.com. *(PR)*

Guam PTAC sets federal contracting workshops

The Guam Procurement Technical Assistance Center is offering free workshops to the public for January 2020. Workshops run from 9am-10am at the University of Guam in the Jesus and Eugenia Leon Guerrero Business and Public Admin Building, Margarita Perez & Jaime Tuquero IT&E Lecture Hall, Room 131(unless otherwise specified):

■ **Jan. 9:** Cybersecurity: Federal Contractor Responsibilities—Cybersecurity is a national security issue. We will discuss what Federal contractors can do to make sure they are complying with DOD requirements with respect to keeping data protected.

■ **Jan. 16:** SBIR/STTR Programs—The Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer programs encourage small businesses to engage in Federal Research and Development that has the potential for commercialization. We will explain the programs and show how innovators can get involved.

■ **Jan. 23:** Government of Guam Procurement—The Guam PTAC will explain Government of Guam Procurement, where to find opportunities, and how to submit bids.

■ **Jan. 30:** DLA Internet Bid Board System—The DLA Internet Bid Board System provides the capability to search for, view, and submit secure quotes for DLA supply RFQs, RFPs, and IFBs. The Guam PTAC will guide you through the process of setting up an account and navigating the system.

For Project Management Professionals, Guam PTAC workshops may count toward your annual Professional Development Unit goals!

Register at <http://guamptac.com/news-and-events.php>, or call/email Therese at 735-2552/admin@guamptac.com. Walk-ins are welcome. *(PR)*



CHRISTMAS IN THE MARIANAS

Studio 29:11 performs at the weekly Christmas in the Marianas on Dec. 21, 2019, at Paseo de Marianas on Saipan.

MVA



Saipan Music & Dance School performs at Christmas in the Marianas on Dec. 21, 2019, at Paseo de Marianas on Saipan.

MVA



The Templates open up the Temple: A Canvas to Wear popup shop/concert at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe last Dec. 30.

JUSTINE NAUTA



Montenejo brothers Jeremi and Jeroen did a little sibling reunion at the Temple: A Canvas to Wear popup shop/concert at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe last Dec. 30.

JUSTINE NAUTA



Emcee Jimmy Blanca introduces all the dance groups on stage at the Temple: A Canvas to Wear popup shop/concert at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe last Dec. 30.

JUSTINE NAUTA



Shane Sabino sings at the Temple: A Canvas to Wear popup shop/concert at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe last Dec. 30.

JUSTINE NAUTA

Temple brand kicks off with multi-talent show

By JUSTINE NAUTA

justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A popup shop/concert called “We Are From the Temple” that was organized by 19-year-old Jerico Montenejo on the evening of Dec. 30 at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe showcased several homegrown talents that ranged from singing to dancing and even a magic show.

Montenejo, who is also the owner of clothing brand “Temple: A Canvas to Wear,” said he spent countless hours of free time to make sure that the event lived up to his expectations. “I feel very grateful, blessed, inspired, and just grateful,” he said after the night’s event.

“I believe it was an amazing kickstart to Jerico’s very promising future of his business. Jerico’s passion for art and performing truly inspired

me and surely inspired the many talented performers that were featured in the showcase as well,” said one of the performers, Neil Fama.

One member of the audience said it was a great way to showcased the many talents on the island. Being in the audience, I felt comfortable and I appreciated the music from the live band and the different styles of dancing. Knowing that this was the first of many shows makes me excited to see what the future holds for the Temple,” he said.

Helping Montenejo organize the event were Saipan Music and Dance Studio, 29:11, Kontagious Mindz, The Templates (Temple’s band), Profound Bandits, Fama, CNMI’s Got Talent winner Shane Sabino, and more.

The event was sponsored by IT&E and Bridge Capital LLC.



All the dance groups gather on the dance floor at the Temple: A Canvas to Wear popup shop/concert at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe last Dec. 30.

JUSTINE NAUTA



Neil Fama joins the dance group for a little dance after his performance at the Temple: A Canvas to Wear popup shop/concert at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe last Dec. 30.

JUSTINE NAUTA



Jerico Montenejo performs a dance number with Lance Elayda and John Cavinta at the Temple: A Canvas to Wear popup shop/concert at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe last Dec. 30.

JUSTINE NAUTA



Jerico Montenejo, third from left, is flanked by his family members. From left, Jeroen Montenejo (brother), Jojie Montenejo (father), Jerico Montenejo, Emma Montenejo (mother), Jermaine Montenejo (sister), and Jeremi Montenejo (brother) after the popup shop/concert at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe last Dec. 30.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A member of the Kontagious Mindz and Felix Rabauliman carry Jerico Montenejo at the Temple: A Canvas to Wear popup shop/concert at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe last Dec. 30.

JUSTINE NAUTA

Opinion

Hafa Adair

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXX, Issue No. 2

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
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EDITORIAL

Trump takes out Iran's architect of mayhem. Now can he de-escalate?

Immediately after the Pentagon confirmed Thursday night that an American military airstrike in Iraq had killed Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani, commander of the Revolutionary Guards' Quds Force, a political debate broke out back home. This was either a decisive, necessary U.S. operation—or a dangerous gambit.

As with many actions undertaken by President Donald Trump, assessments depend greatly on how much faith one places in Trump's judgment. Issues of national security shouldn't be partisan; protecting the country should be everyone's business. But Trump's blend of braggadocio and unorthodox impulses makes him appear either bold or irresponsible.

Statements from the Pentagon, the State Department and the White House suggested the U.S. military had justification for taking out Soleimani, the Iranian military's general in charge of murderous mischief and unquestionably an enemy of the United States. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said a planned attack on Americans had been "imminent" before the drone strike.

The Pentagon said it went after Soleimani for "actively developing plans to attack American diplomats and service members in Iraq and throughout the region." That sounds plausible, though gauging justification for Soleimani's death would be easier if the Pentagon or the State Department provide more details about such plans.

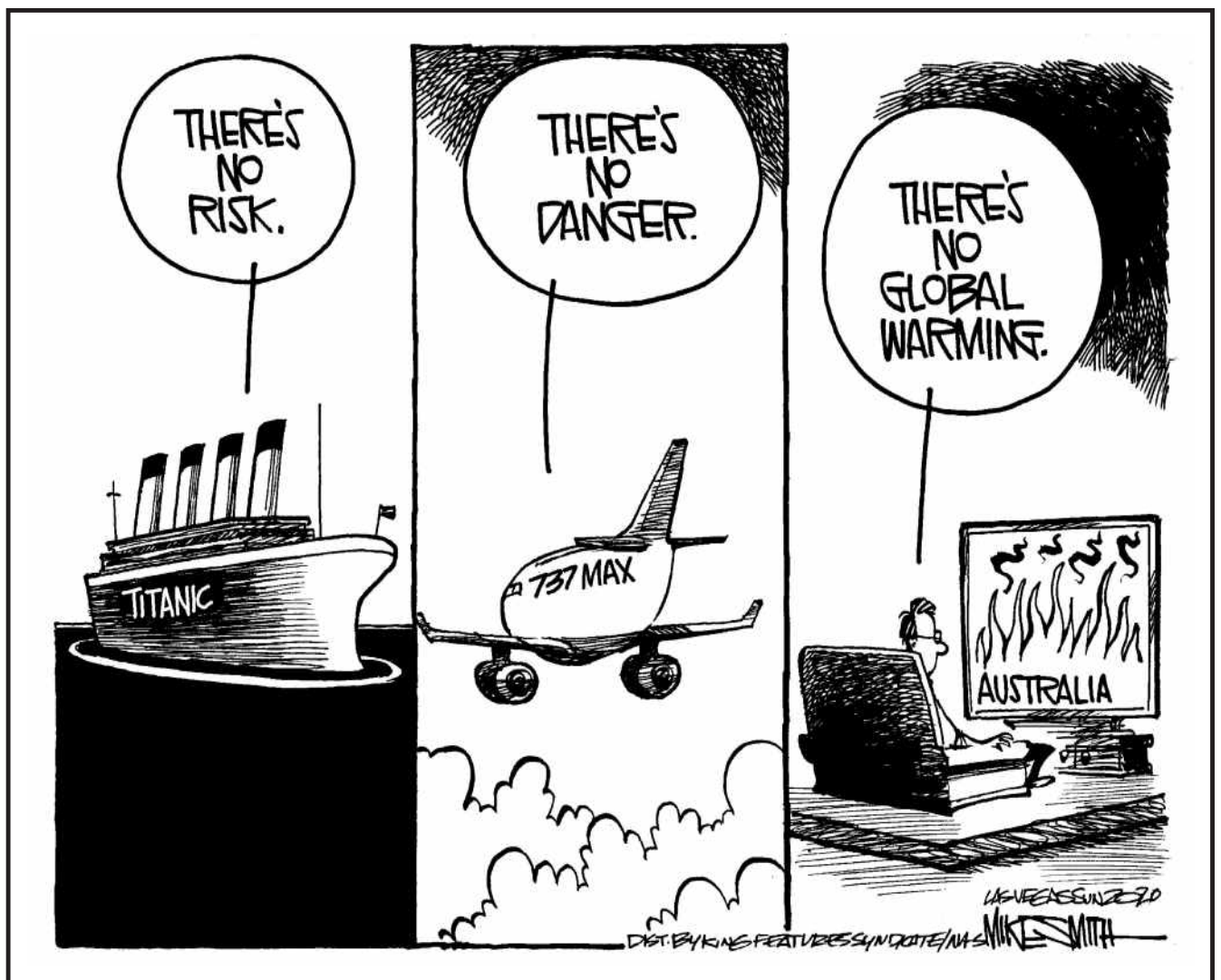
What's especially hard to assess is whether eliminating a powerful military adversary will make the Middle East a safer or a more dangerous place for Americans and American interests. Tehran has already vowed to retaliate, and in the short term, the Iranian general's death raises the risk for U.S. troops, government workers and even civilians in Iraq and other parts of the region. In the long term, though, Soleimani's death hurts Iran because he was the mastermind of Iranian adventurism.

Soleimani had a long history of American blood on his hands. His forces in Iraq were responsible for killing hundreds of American troops during the Iraq war. Soleimani also supported the rise of Hezbollah as a Lebanon-based terrorist organization, and he protected Syrian strongman Bashar Assad. According to the Pentagon, in recent months Soleimani orchestrated attacks on coalition bases in Iraq, including the Dec. 27 attack that killed an American contractor.

The United States and Iran have been in a standoff for years. The highest priority has been to curb Iranian nuclear ambitions, but Iran's shadowy military moves represent an ongoing threat to U.S. security and interests across the Middle East.

In recent months, Iran has stepped up its provocation campaign, largely in response to the sanctions squeeze that Trump has put on Tehran, part of a broad effort to quell

See TRUMP on Next Page



Trump's deadly message to Iran's terrorist regime

For 40 years American presidents have pondered a fundamental question about Iran, best summed up by Henry Kissinger: Is it a country or a cause? On Thursday evening, Donald Trump gave his answer: Iran is a cause, a terrorist cause, and it will be treated as such.

That could be the lasting implication of the drone strike Trump ordered that killed Iran's indispensable General Qassem Soleimani. Since Jimmy Carter, U.S. presidents have sanctioned Iran and its leaders for sponsoring terrorist groups responsible for mayhem and murder worldwide. Until Thursday, however, those leaders have been spared the grisly fate of Osama bin Laden or Abu-Bakr al-Baghdadi.

Nation-states are generally expected to cooperate against terrorists, but with Soleimani's leadership Iran has been a major facilitator of terror. Starting in 2003, he built up a network of proxies throughout the Middle East that tipped the balance of power in Iran's favor. Under his command, Shiite militias in Iraq injured or killed thousands of U.S. troops with powerful roadside bombs. He orchestrated the arming and training of Yemen's Houthi rebellion. He planned the intervention in Syria that saved Bashar al Assad's brutal war machine. He helped plan the Iraqi government's crackdown against anti-Iranian protesters.

And yet Soleimani saw himself as untouchable. He did not take the precautions of a marked man, cloaking his movements and hiding his location. In fact, he would often post selfies from various fronts in Iran's regional war, taunting his adversaries.

In some ways, this drone strike is surprising. In June, Trump called off at the last minute a strike on Iranian positions after it shot down an unmanned U.S. drone over the Persian Gulf. Over the summer and into the fall, Trump escalated sanctions against Iran's regime, but also tried to restart negotiations with its political leaders. He has railed against the "endless wars" waged by his predecessors and sought to withdraw U.S. forces from Syria.

Iran has responded to this economic pressure with military escalations. In September, the U.S. accused Iran of striking a major Saudi oil processing facility. This followed a series of Iranian attacks on oil tankers in the Persian Gulf. In October, Iranian-backed Shiite militias began hitting U.S. positions in Iraq. Those attacks have become bolder in recent months, cul-

By **ELI LAKE**
Bloomberg News

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minating in an attack last week in Kirkuk that killed a U.S. contractor and wounded several U.S. servicemen.

That crossed a red line for Trump. He has warned the Iranian regime since last spring that the U.S. would respond in kind to any attack that killed a U.S. citizen. The U.S. responded this week by bombing Kataib Hezbollah bases in western Iraq and Syria.

Then Iranian-led militias stormed the U.S. embassy in Baghdad on Wednesday, setting fires and essentially holding diplomats hostage for 24 hours before retreating. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper issued a prescient warning after the siege. "If we get word of attacks," he said, "we will take preemptive action as well to protect American forces, to protect American lives."

The consequence is that the man who orchestrated terror on behalf of Iran has met the same fate as the terrorists he oversaw. This counts as a significant escalation; Iran's supreme leader has already vowed revenge. Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah has urged Shiite militias in Iraq not to let Soleimani's death go to waste.

And Iran has many options for retaliation. Its militias have enough rockets to turn the U.S. embassy in Baghdad into rubble. Its proxies are capable of kidnappings, suicide bombs and other mayhem against softer American targets in Europe. Hezbollah, a Lebanese militia and political party created by Iran in the 1980s, controls some networks inside the U.S.

That's not to say the U.S. attack was unjustified. Soleimani was "actively developing plans to attack American diplomats and service members in Iraq and throughout the region," the Pentagon said in a statement Thursday. "This strike was aimed at

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EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

It's simple: We just want IPI to follow the law

By EDWIN PROPST, TINA SABLAN, EDMUND VILLAGOMEZ, SHEILA BABAUTA, RICHARD LIZAMA, and DONALD MANGLONA

Editor's Note: The following was submitted by members of the minority bloc of the CNMI House of representatives in the 21st Legislature.

Casino apologists and proponents often accuse House minority members of being “anti-casino” and overly critical of Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC, d.b.a. Best Sunshine, and the casino industry on Saipan. The truth is we are not. We just want IPI to follow our laws and the casino license agreement. Is that such a bad thing?

While the pro-casino group turns a blind eye to multiple violations and red flags, the House minority members speak out and seek to hold IPI and the government accountable. When have we spoken out? In the 19th, 20th, and 21st legislatures. Here are 17 examples of House minority members speaking out on behalf of the people of the CNMI, with their best interests at heart:

1. When CNMI Public Law 18-56, the law that legalized casino gambling on Saipan, failed to include a gross gaming revenue tax for the casino industry on Saipan. Saipan is the only place in the entire world with a casino industry and no gross gaming revenue tax. Minority members in the 19th and 20th legislatures introduced legislation to provide for a casino gross gaming revenue tax, but it failed to gain support from the GOP leadership and the administration. In the 21st Legislature, minor-

ity members are trying again—this time with a local gaming tax for the 3rd Senatorial District.

2. When IPI violated the Smoke-free Air Act of 2008 (P.L. 16-45) with its temporary casino built inside the Duty Free Galleria. IPI failed to build walls or an enclosure to keep smoke inside the casino, thereby subjecting employees and patrons of Hard Rock Café and Duty Free Galleria and boutiques to noxious cigarette fumes. Many employees complained to us and we demanded IPI follow the law. After many battles, IPI finally complied.

3. When the GOP majority in the Legislature and the administration pushed to take the \$15-million annual casino license fee away from retirees to ensure they receive 100% of their pensions, and gave it to the three senatorial districts to spend as they please. This legislation became Public Law 20-10. House minority members voted no to this bill, but it still became law. Sorry, retirees. We tried. Sadly, it was retirees who lobbied for the legalization of casino gambling on Saipan to protect their pensions.

4. When IPI was not required to provide a construction completion bond for its casino hotel. Minority members advocated for a mandatory completion bond to ensure the casino hotel project in Garapan would meet construction deadlines and be finished on time. That bond requirement appeared in the original version of H.B. 19-95, but a last-minute amendment on the House floor removed the requirement from this bill. The House minority members voted no to the bill. Why the completion bond requirement was removed from this legislation remains to be answered, but one thing is clear: only IPI benefited. Five years into the project, casino construction is far from complete.

5. When IPI and the administration amended the casino license agreement eight times and counting. The amendments have included multiple extensions on construction deadlines, and no penalties have been imposed for delays or damage. Every single amendment has been favorable to IPI.

6. When IPI was fined \$210,000 by BECQ for polluting the Garapan lagoon on multiple occasions. These egregious crimes against our environment and public health were completely unconscionable and totally avoidable.

7. When IPI blocked off half of the public road in front of their casino, financially crippling many of the small businesses along that street and adjoining streets. These small businesses complained multiple times, and it seems only a few of us heard them. Some have finally sued.

8. When local employees at the casino complained they were receiving a lower hourly wage than their Chinese counterparts who had the same duties and responsibilities. According to the local employees, they were paid less because they didn't speak Mandarin. We encouraged them to file complaints with the Federal Wage Commission under the U.S. Department of Labor along with a complaint to our local Department of Labor.

9. When there were multiple protests and strikes by foreign construction workers who were not getting paid their promised salaries and were living in deplorable housing conditions, many of whom left island without full compensation. A few of us actually went and met with them and even dropped off food and water that were donated by concerned citizens and non-profit agencies.

10. When a construction worker was killed on site and multiple OSHA violations were discovered at IPI's construction site that resulted in dozens of documented injuries, many of them life-threatening and debilitating, with some workers losing limbs and becoming paralyzed. CHCC doctors and nurses and administrators were well aware of all of these horrific injuries, but somehow the CNMI administration was not. We do not know what action, if any, the CNMI government took

to protect these workers, but we do know that many were never compensated for their injuries, and some have finally sued IPI and its contractors.

11. When IPI failed to pay its developer's infrastructure tax. To date, IPI still owes an estimated \$18 million in developer's infrastructure taxes, and no government agency with any authority seems to be doing anything to make IPI pay what it owes. What other business is allowed to get away with this?

12. When IPI failed to pay its corporate income and business gross revenue taxes. According to a 2018 audit, IPI owed \$33 million in corporate income taxes and \$5 million in business gross revenue taxes to the CNMI government. In 2019, IPI only paid a measly \$41,000 in BGRT. How much will IPI owe in 2020?

13. When IPI failed to pay out the Community Benefit Fund, a requirement under the license agreement. The 2018 audit showed that IPI owed \$17 million in Community Benefit Fund distributions, and an additional \$20 million as of Oct. 1, 2019. No one in the administration—not the governor, not the Lottery Commission, not the Casino Commission—seems to want to answer questions about why IPI is not being required to honor this contractual obligation.

14. When IPI failed to pay dozens of vendors. A 2018 audit showed that IPI owed more than \$35 million to vendors. Some of these vendors are now suing IPI, and many have petitioned the Commonwealth Casino Commission to exercise its authority to compel IPI to pay up.

15. When IPI sued the Commonwealth Casino Commission to prevent the commission from releasing public information that was requested through an Open Government Act request filed by Rep. Ed Propst in his official capacity. IPI lost that lawsuit in federal court and the CCC complied with the OGA request. The records released included IPI's financial statements that are required by CNMI law to be disclosed.

16. When the FBI raided the construction companies working for IPI and arrested construction officials for illegally employing tourists. These construction officials later pleaded guilty to harboring aliens.

17. When the FBI raided IPI offices and seized computers, files, and personal cell phones of IPI executives and employees. Search warrant records for this second FBI raid involving IPI indicate the feds are looking at the casino's possible involvement in money laundering, fraud, and public corruption.

House minority members want the casino to succeed, but we also expect the casino and its proponents to honor the laws they are bound to, like all other businesses. We expect IPI to live up to its promises to our people and we object to any special privileges that allow IPI to operate above the laws of the Commonwealth and outside norms for the casino industry.

The mere fact that IPI is the only casino in the entire world that does not pay a gross gaming revenue tax is deeply troubling. This gaming revenue tax could have been used to help our people living in tents. It could have been used to rebuild our broken homes and schools and infrastructure. It could have been used to pay down land compensation claims and to help fund our health-care system. And while the casino has enriched a few privileged and well-connected people, the majority of our people do not see direct benefits from the casino industry.

House minority members are not the “opposition.” We are advocates for good governance. We are not beholden to the casino, or any special interest. We are independent-minded and we speak freely and from the heart. Perhaps one day the minority will become the majority. Whether that happens through the will of the voters or not, we will continue to be a voice for the people we serve, and no special interest group will ever silence us.

We wish all the people of the Commonwealth a blessed and healthy 2020.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Biba Democrats!

We the people of the CNMI are literally “under siege” by the GOP, yet our Legislature continues to delay and play games in performing their fiduciary duty to place checks on the governor's activities. Our attorney general has remained totally silent even though he owes it to the people to at least say something. We the people can't depend upon our Legislature nor our attorney general. If there is a need for people to come in and sign a personal complaint, I am more than confident these people can be produced. Just contact me and I will organize that group (you know where and how to find me).

The mid-term elections are just around the corner now and the Democrats are gearing up for this major political event in the CNMI. The Democrats have called for a general membership meeting this coming Saturday, Jan. 11, from 9am to 12pm, at the Grandvrio hotel (former Hafa Adai Hotel). If you are a genuinely concerned citizen and want to help in taking back our government by running as a Democrat or just want to vote a different way this time, you need to be there! This is the opportunity that many of us have been waiting for to help put a stop to corruption, so tell a friend to tell another friend to be at the Democrat's meeting this Saturday.

Ambrose M Bennett

Kagman, Saipan

TRUMP

From Page 10

Iran's nuclear ambitions. Iranian mine attacks on oil tankers near the Strait of Hormuz were followed by missile strikes on Saudi Arabian oil infrastructure.

Iran undoubtedly is weaker now that Soleimani is dead. And there's other bleak news for Tehran in this assault: the realization that U.S. intelligence was able to penetrate Soleimani's security bubble and hit him as he was leaving Baghdad's main airport.

What's unanswerable at this point: Does killing Soleimani lead to retaliatory strikes by Iran that demand reciprocal responses from the U.S., or can a perilous escalation be avoided? Trump issued a military order to take out a dangerous Iranian military leader. What Trump does next will be just as crucial.

REGIME

From Page 10

detering future Iranian attack plans.”

So it's misleading to say that the killing of Soleimani is the opening of a new U.S. war against Iran. It's more accurate to say that it opens a new chapter in an ongoing war. Until this week,

that war has been waged through economic sanctions against Iran's regime and precision strikes against its proxies. Now Trump has erased the distinction between Iran and its proxies.

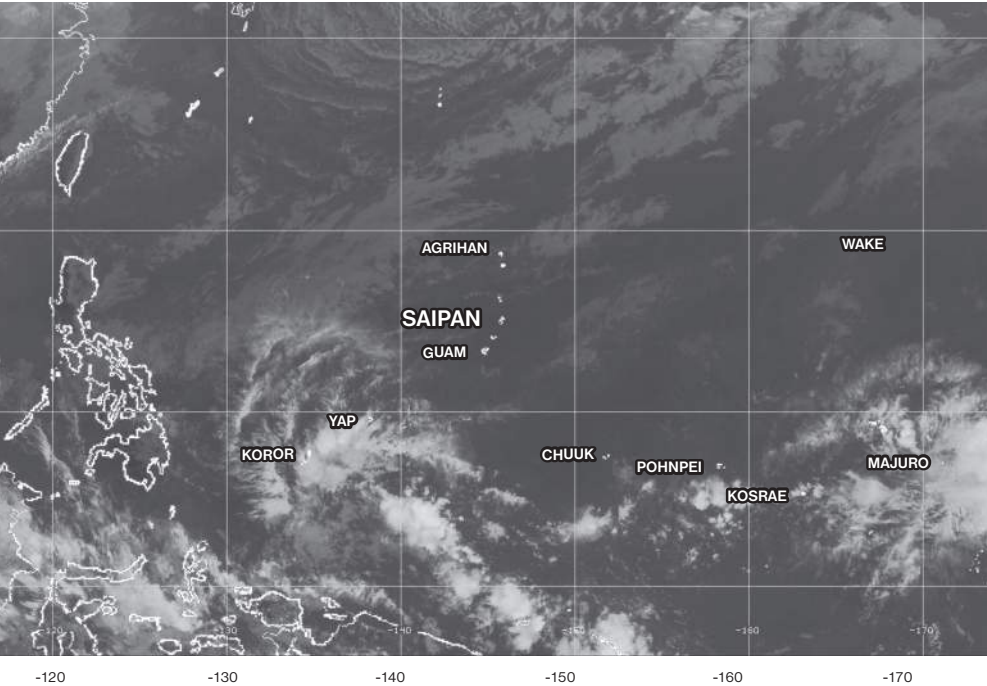
That's a blow not just to Iran's network of militias and terrorists. It's also a blow to the regime's campaign to bully the world into treating it like a normal country. Iran is a country run by terrorists, and Trump is right to treat them as such.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	
Partly sunny and breezy with isolated showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	
86°	75°	86°	75°	80°	70°	80°	70°	80°	70°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:348 AM, SUNDAY, JANUARY 5, 2020
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Guam weather radar shows a few showers south of the Guam waters, with almost no showers within the Marianas waters. The VAD wind profile indicates east-northeast winds of 15 to 20 knots through the lowest 4 thousand feet of the air. The buoys reveal combined seas of 6 to 7 feet composed of a northeast swell and east wind waves.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	84° / 76°	
Palau	Partly Cloudy	84° / 78°	
Yap	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°	
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	84° / 79°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°	
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°	

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼ °F
Auckland	Windy	64° / 57°	
Beijing	Mostly Cloudy	43° / 25°	
Hong Kong	Mostly Sunny	73° / 64°	
Honolulu	Windy	81° / 72°	
London	Shower	48° / 39°	
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	76° / 49°	
Manila	Partly Cloudy	88° / 75°	
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	73° / 61°	
Miami	Partly Cloudy	73° / 64°	
New York	Partly Cloudy	47° / 33°	
Osaka	Shower	52° / 50°	
Paris	Partly Cloudy	45° / 39°	
Busan	Rainy	61° / 46°	
Rome	Sunny	54° / 30°	
Salem	Mostly Sunny	65° / 46°	
San Francisco	Sunny	56° / 43°	
Seoul	Rainy	43° / 37°	
Tokyo	Showers	48° / 41°	
Washington, DC	Sunny	52° / 31°	

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
5:16 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.20	
09:50 AM	LOW TIDE	0.86	
3:42 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.59	
11:12 PM	LOW TIDE	-0.05	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:44 AM	6:00 PM
Tuesday	6:44 AM	6:00 PM
Wednesday	6:45 AM	6:01 PM
Thursday	6:45 AM	6:02 PM
Friday	6:45 AM	6:02 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	2:14 AM	2:10 PM
Tuesday	-	3:05 AM	2:53 PM
Wednesday	-	3:59 AM	3:40 PM
Thursday	-	4:56 AM	4:33 PM
Friday	-	5:55 AM	5:30 PM

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of \$180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 2, 2019

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily	UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA105	6:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6	UA104	4:45pm	5:26pm	2, 4, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
SKY811	10:15am	3:00pm	Daily	SKY816	4:35pm	7:30pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
				SKY816	5:05pm	8:00pm	6
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3451	3:20am	6:30am	Daily	7C3452	9:35pm	2:30am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
				7C3452	10:05pm	2:30am+1	3
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	2:05am	6:05am	Daily	OZ6233	8:00am	1:20pm	2, 4, 6
OZ626	2:10am	6:05am	1	OZ623	8:55am	2:30pm	1, 3, 5, 7
OZ626	2:50am	6:25am	3, 7	7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 4, 5, 6	TW309	11:10am	4:25pm	Daily
7C3403	4:35am	8:35am	Daily	OZ625	7:30pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ6243	3:20pm	7:10pm	2, 4, 6	TW307	7:45pm	1:05am+1	Daily
OZ624	3:50pm	7:40pm	1, 3, 5, 7	OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily	7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily
TW310	5:25pm	10:15pm	Daily				
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)				SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8648	6:10am	8:50am	4, 7	3U8647	10:30pm	4:30am+1	3, 6
SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)				HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN			
JD396	7:30am	12:05pm	1	JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4	JD395	8:50pm	5:00am+1	7
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)				BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN			
MU764	1:30am	6:00am	3, 5, 7	MU763	4:50pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/701	2:10am	10:35am	1 via ICN	UA184/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:35am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
UA117/183	9:15am	9:50pm	Daily via GUM	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA117/193	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR	UA192/174	10:40pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA156/183	6:20pm	9:50pm	2, 4, 6 via GUM	UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA156/193	6:20pm	11:50pm	2 via GUM-ROR	OZ704/6233	11:45pm	1:20pm+1	1, 3, 5 via ICN
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	2:30pm+1	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN	OZ746/6233	12:35am	1:20pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ746/623	12:35am	2:30pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:40am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ6243/9661	3:20pm	11:15pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ624/9661	3:50pm	11:15pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN	UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
				UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, BC SkyMark ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA				1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily	1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily	1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily	1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN				1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily	1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily	1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily	1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM							
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY				
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily				
GUAM TO ROTA							
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY				
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily				
SAIPAN TO TINIAN							
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY				
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily				
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily				

Business

Training season officially opens for United Airlines Guam Marathon

» UGM unveils new limited edition training T-shirts for 2020 event

TUMON, Guam—Guam Sports Events, Inc., organizers of the United Airlines Guam Marathon, unveiled its limited edition 2020 training t-shirt today to jump-start the official opening of the UGM training season.

The new training tees were designed by locally owned and operated Run Guam, Inc. Run Guam has been the official merchandising partner for UGM for the past two years.

A limited number of training tees in extra small to extra large sizes are available for sale at Run Guam at their Tumon store across the Pacific Islands Club. Runners can win a free training tee by following UGM's social pages and entering the contests planned within the next few weeks.

Ben Ferguson, UGM event director, said, "UGM training season is officially in full swing. We want to see runners in their training tees preparing for Guam's biggest sporting event. This year, we wanted to feature a retro, unisex design that incorporates bold, happy colors to lift a runner's mood and motivate them

to train. 2020 is the perfect time to make bold moves, and we encourage runners to challenge themselves this year. You won't want to miss UGM 2020!"

The tees are printed on a DRIKWIK fabric, which is durable, lightweight, and breathable. Run Guam selected the DRIKWIK fabric for its moisture-wicking technology that helps to support a runner's performance in Guam's tropical climate.

Pilar Lagunaña, president and CEO of Guam Visitors Bureau, Gold Sponsors of UGM said, "The 2020 design has a tropical feel and incorporates the vibrant hues of blue, violet, pink, orange and yellow seen in Guam's spectacular sunsets. I applaud Run Guam for perfectly capturing the essence of Guam and UGM in one design."

The electric colors, along with the large reflective UGM logo on the chest, will enhance a runner's visibility to drivers, which helps to keep them safe during early morning or evening runs. The back design



Guam Sports Events, Inc., organizers of the United Airlines Guam Marathon, unveiled the limited edition DRIKWIK 2020 UGM Training t-shirt. Runners can win a tee through the event's social media pages or by purchasing it at Run Guam, the official merchandising partner of UGM. Photographed in Hagåtña in front of the mural by artist Sheep Chen (@sheep.chen).

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

includes the event's training slogan "Training in Paradise" and the 2020 event logo and date, which makes it a great collectible item or gift.

UGM is scheduled for Sunday, April 5, 2020 at the Gov. Joseph Flores Memorial Park (Ypao Beach) in Tumon. Registration is ongoing for the four race distances – 5K, 10K, half marathon (13.1 miles) and marathon (26.2 miles). More than 1,300 runners have already registered for the event. Event organizers encourage runners to register online at unitedairlinesguammarathon.com.

UGM, now in its eighth year, will take place on Sunday, April 5, 2020. UGM is organized by Guam Sports Events Inc., a nonprofit organization that hosts annual sports tourism events to promote Guam's Håfa Adai spirit and attract more visitors to Guam. Considered to be Guam's premier running event, UGM includes 5K, 10K, half marathon (13.1 miles) and marathon (26.2 miles) race distances. UGM is Guam's first International Association of Athletic Federations (IAAF) approved marathon and has also been officially certified by the

Association of International Marathons and Distance Races (AIMS). This designation means that marathon runners may use UGM as a qualifying event for the Boston Marathon. Complete event details and registration can be found on the official event website at unitedguammarathon.com. UGM is proud to welcome back United Airlines as its title sponsor and Guam Visitors Bureau and Pacific Islands Club as gold sponsors of the 2020 event. The free UGM app is available for download on Google Play and the Apple Store. (PR)

NEW YORK (AP)—Small business owners have plenty of changes to deal with as 2020 begins—higher labor costs for many companies, and some owners will discover that they have to comply with new laws that aren't on the books in their own states.

As of Jan. 1, there are higher minimum wages in a quarter of the states, and new federal overtime rules. The IRS has new W-4 forms owners will need to get used to. Plastic bags are on their way out at stores and other businesses in a growing number of places around the country. And California has new laws on freelancers and consumer privacy that can affect out-of-state companies.

A look at a handful of the 2020 changes in federal, state and local laws and regulations:

MINIMUM WAGES GO UP

The minimum wage is higher in 21 states as of Jan. 1, including New York, where the minimum rose Dec. 31, according to the National Employment Law Project. The increases in California, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York are steps toward an eventual \$15 minimum approved by state legislatures.

Increases are planned later in the year in states including Connecticut, New York, Oregon and Washington, D.C., and some counties and cities

are raising their minimums as well.

While many businesses pay hourly workers above the minimum, when there's an increase in the wage, many owners give all their staffers a raise to stay competitive amid a tight labor market.

NEW OVERTIME RULES

The Labor Department's long-awaited revamp of its overtime rules are now in effect, giving an estimated 1.3 million workers a raise. Workers earning under \$684 per week or

\$35,568 must now be paid overtime, up from the previous threshold of \$455 per week or \$23,660 annually.

Retailers, restaurants and manufacturers are most likely to be affected, with shift supervisors and assistant managers among the positions that must now be paid overtime after 40 hours a week. While all employers are subject to the rules, the higher threshold is likely to have the greatest impact on small companies that lack the revenue cushion that larger businesses have against higher costs.

Employers are expected to limit the hours of some workers so they don't incur overtime, or raise some staffers' pay to a level above the threshold, making them exempt from the new rules.

NEW W-4 FORMS

The IRS has issued new W-4 forms for 2020, changing the way tax is withheld from employees' pay. The new forms reflect changes required by the tax law that went into effect in late 2017; they do away with the allowances long used to calculate how much money should be withheld from paychecks. Instead, the new forms use information that can be found on employees' tax returns.

Current employees don't need to fill out new W-4 forms, but new

going into effect later in the year.

There are variations among the laws and some exceptions—in New York, for example, pharmacies are exempt if the purchase is for a prescription drug, and restaurants can give diners bags for takeout food. Some of the laws also require a 5 cent charge if a customer wants a paper bag.

While the laws have been passed out of environmental concerns, small retailers might see a benefit from not having to buy and supply plastic bags. And those that sell reusable

shopping tote bags could get a small revenue uptick.

CALIFORNIA CHANGE

A new California law gives consumers more control over the personal information companies collect and share with other businesses. While the law aims to exempt very small companies, those that do business with California residents, including out-of-state firms, can find themselves required to comply.

Under the law, companies must be able to tell consumers what information they have and what they do with it. Consumers must have the option to have their information deleted from companies' computer systems. Businesses that handle information

collected by others—for example, payment processors—can also find themselves subject to the law.

Companies are subject to the law if they have worldwide revenue above \$25 million, collect or receive the personal information of 50,000 or more California consumers, households or electronic devices; or those who get at least half their revenue from selling personal information. Small businesses can reach the 50,000 threshold for collecting or receiving information—an individual who has a phone, tablet, PC at home and one at work counts as four users, not one.

A separate law puts strict limits on who can work as an independent contractor or freelancer. The law is aimed at ensuring that workers in the gig economy like Uber and Lyft drivers get the protections that labor laws give employees. It will force business owners to decide whether to hire these workers as employees, even for temporary assignments, or look for help in other states.

The law also affects out-of-state companies if they have been using independent contractors or freelancers in California. Changes in California laws are also noteworthy because the state can be a trailblazer when it comes to employee, consumer and environmental issues. The nation's first laws requiring paid sick leave for workers and banning plastic bags were enacted in California.

2020 brings higher labor costs for small businesses

Nation

US-Iran tensions thrust foreign policy into Democrats' race

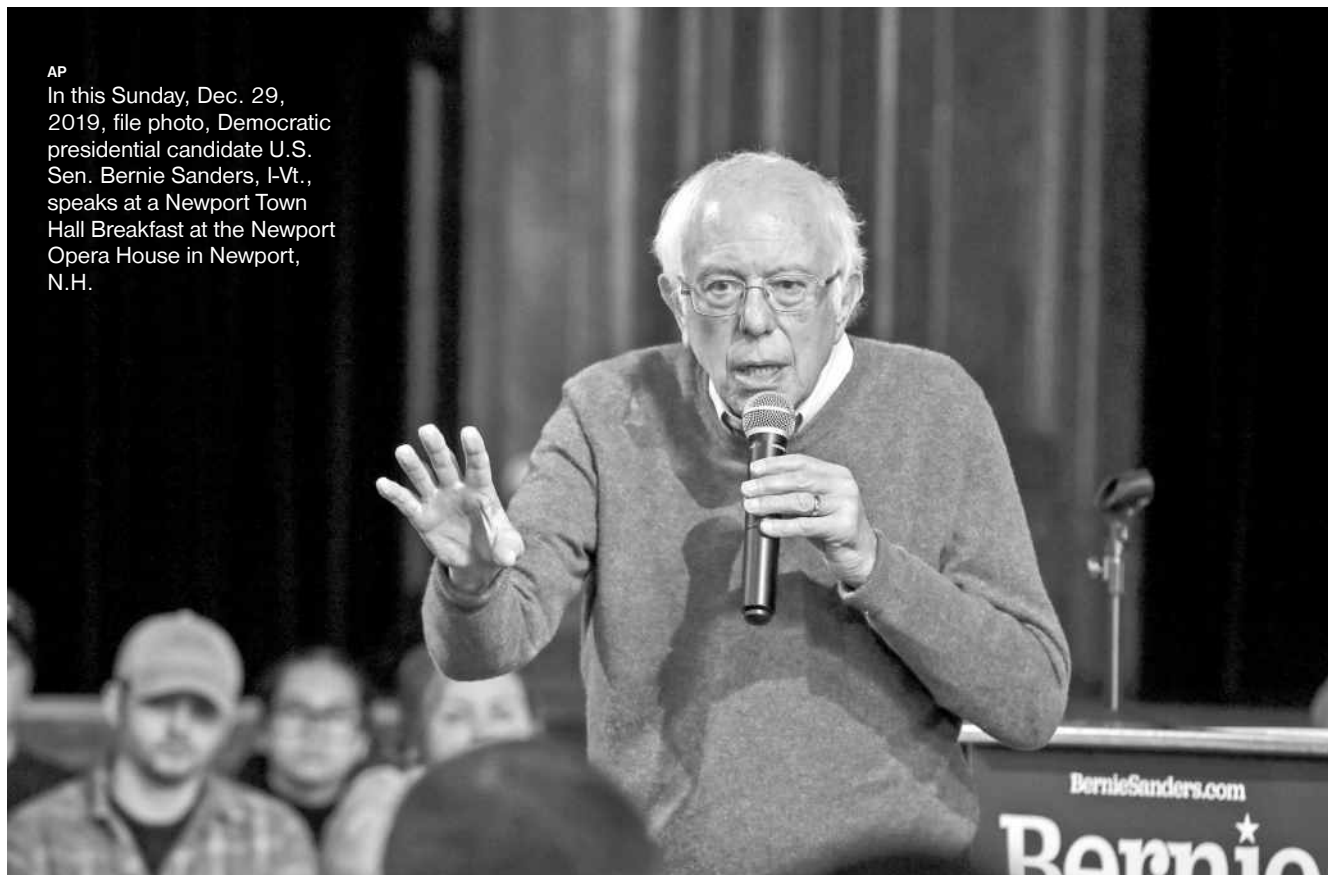
NORTH CONWAY, N.H. (AP)—Democratic presidential candidates are lambasting President Donald Trump's decision to kill Iran's top general in an airstrike, a move that has thrust foreign policy to the forefront of the primary and revived intraparty disputes over military intervention in the Middle East.

Leading candidates in the Democratic primary were united in describing Gen. Qasem Soleimani as a murderer responsible for the deaths of Americans. But they also slammed Trump as reckless and ill-prepared for the consequences — and retaliation — likely to follow the killing.

Former Vice President Joe Biden charged Thursday that Trump "tossed a stick of dynamite into a tinderbox." Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren said the move "increased the likelihood of more deaths and new Middle East conflict."

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders slammed what he called a "dangerous escalation" that puts the United States "on the path to another war—potentially one that could be even worse than before."

The foreign policy focus, at least for a day, marked a sharp shift for a Democratic primary that has so far been dominated by domestic policy concerns such as health care, the economy and immigration. The narrow focus reflects the relative inexperience of the large Democratic field on the international stage as well as voters' priorities after nearly



AP
In this Sunday, Dec. 29, 2019, file photo, Democratic presidential candidate U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., speaks at a Newport Town Hall Breakfast at the Newport Opera House in Newport, N.H.

two decades at war.

But the rising tension with Iran is shifting the debate just a month before voting begins in Iowa. That new debate is likely to revive fights between centrist Democrats and Democrats on the left who are skeptical of military intervention.

Biden, who has more foreign policy experience than the rest of the field combined, could benefit from the sudden attention to global affairs, though his long record in complicated foreign entanglements creates vulnerabilities that critics in both parties are trying to exploit.

That intraparty fight starring

Biden had begun even before Trump authorized the strike that killed Soleimani.

Earlier in the week, Pete Buttigieg—the now-former mayor of South Bend, Indiana—criticized Biden for voting to authorize the Iraq War, calling it part of the nation's "worst foreign policy decision" of the 37-year-old's lifetime. On Friday, Buttigieg, a former military intelligence officer, didn't call out Biden by name but made reference to the Iraq War while addressing the airstrike: "This must not be the beginning of another endless war."

Sanders initially described

Trump's decision as an "assassination." Facing voters in Iowa on Friday, he also noted his opposition to the Iraq War and re-

iterated his warnings from over a decade ago that U.S. intervention there would destabilize the region. He said the outcome in

Iraq should act as a guide for foreign policy now.

"We face a similar crossroads fraught with danger," Sanders said, insisting that the U.S. must commit to ending its military presence in the Middle East.

Hawaii congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard, a combat veteran who has long criticized U.S. policy in the Middle East, called the killing of Soleimani "an act of war" committed without authorization from Congress.

Colorado Sen. Michael Bennet, a moderate who has struggled to get traction in the 2020 contest, was critical of Trump's move during an interview but also said, "Democratic voters should think critically about politicians who voted for the Iraq War."

"That was a terrible vote," he added, referring to Biden's support for the war.

Biden, meanwhile, has not aggressively defended his vote. On Friday, he focused on Trump, raising doubts about the president's ability to handle the complex geopolitics involved.

ACROSS THE NATION

Idaho man's home searched for wife's death, missing stepkids

REXBURG, Idaho (AP)—Authorities have searched the home of an Idaho man linked to the suspicious death of his first wife and the disappearance of his two new stepchildren. On Friday, investigators with the Rexburg police, Fremont County sheriff's office and FBI executed a search warrant on the house Chad Daybell shared with Tammy Daybell, who was found dead at home in October. Initially thought to be a natural death, Tammy Daybell's remains have since been exhumed in Utah, where she was buried. Autopsy results are pending. The search warrant was also in connection to the disappearance of Joshua Vallow, 7, and Tylee Ryan, 17, who haven't been seen since September. The children's mother, Lori Vallow—who is also now known as Lori Daybell—married Chad Daybell shortly after the other wife's death. Lori Daybell's former spouse, Charles Vallow was killed in July in Arizona in a confrontation with her brother, Alex Cox. Cox, who died on Dec. 12, said he shot Vallow in self-defense. Authorities haven't said why they got the warrant or what they found.

Police: Robber sexually assaulted hostage at Illinois bank

ROCKFORD, Ill. (AP)—A man armed with a pellet gun who took a woman hostage inside an Illinois bank sexually assaulted her before surrendering to authorities following a six-hour standoff, police said Saturday. Nicholas August, 39, of Rockford, was being held Saturday at the Winnebago County Jail on \$2 million bond. He is charged with two counts of criminal sexual assault, armed robbery and aggravated unlawful restraint, according to a statement from police. The woman, a 39-year-old bank employee, was treated at a hospital for injuries that were not life-threatening, police said. August entered Heritage Credit Union in Rockford, about 2:30 p.m. Friday

and threatened employees with a pellet gun that resembled a real gun, according to police. He took the woman hostage before ordering other employees out of the building, the Rockford Register Star reported. Negotiators from Rockford police and the FBI talked with August during the standoff, and a Winnebago County SWAT team was brought to the scene. August surrendered to police around 9 p.m. Friday. The hostage left the building with him and was ushered away by officers.

Mississippi says two inmates escaped from troubled prison

Mississippi authorities were searching for two prisoners believed to have escaped Saturday from one of several prisons rocked by violence that has left at least five inmates dead in the past week. Gov. Phil Bryant on Saturday said via Twitter that he has directed "the use of all necessary assets and personnel" to find the two inmates who escaped from the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman. The state Department of Public Safety has deployed state troopers and the highway patrol's special operations group to help the Department of Corrections find the two inmates and to help restore order at the troubled facility that they escaped from, Bryant said. The Corrections Department said in a Facebook posting that David May, 42, and Dillion Williams, 27, were discovered missing from Parchman during an "emergency count" about 1:45 a.m. May is serving a life sentence for two aggravated assault convictions in Harrison County, and Williams is serving a 40-year sentence for residential burglary and aggravated assault in Marshall County. The department said via Twitter Saturday afternoon that there were no major disturbances occurring at Parchman. "There was a minor fire at Unit 30 earlier this week. That fire, set by an inmate, was immediately extinguished. Like other facilities in the prison system, the prison has limited movement," the department tweeted. (AP)

Church offers little outreach to minority victims of priests

The Samples were a black Chicago family, with six children and few resources. The priest helped them with tuition, clothes, bills. He offered the promise of opportunities—a better life.

He also abused all the children.

They told no one. They were afraid of not being believed and of losing what little they had, said one son, Terrence Sample. And nobody asked, until a lawyer investigating alleged abuses by the same priest prompted him to break his then 33-year silence.

"Somebody had to make the effort," Sample said. "Why wasn't it the church?"

Even as it has pledged to go after predators in its ranks and provide support to those harmed by clergy, the church has done little to identify and reach sexual abuse victims. For survivors of color, who often face additional social and cultural barriers to coming forward on their own, the lack of

concerted outreach on behalf of the church means less public exposure—and potentially, more opportunities for abuse to go on, undetected.

Of 88 dioceses that responded to an Associated Press inquiry, seven knew the ethnicities of victims. While it was clear at least three had records of some sort, only one stated it purposely collected such data as part of the reporting process. Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, Pacific Islanders and Hawaiians make up nearly 46% of the faithful in the U.S., according to the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, an authoritative source of Catholic-related data. But the Catholic Church has made almost no effort to track the victims among them.

"The church has to come into the shadows, into the trenches to find the people who were victimized, especially the people of color,"

Sample said. "There are other people like me and my family, who won't come forward unless someone comes to them."

Brian Clites, a leading scholar on clergy sexual abuse and professor at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, said the church has demonstrated a pattern of funneling predator priests to economically disadvantaged communities of color, where victims have much more to lose if they report their abuse.

"They are less likely to know where to get help, less likely to have money for a lawyer to pursue that help and they are more vulnerable to counterattacks" from the church, which will hire investigators against the survivors, said Clites.

Alaska leads the nation in rates of sexual violence, and Florence Kenney said the Catholic church has played a role in perpetuating the abuse of natives there.

Asia

Morrison defends response as weather brings respite in fires

SYDNEY (AP)—Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison defended his leadership and his government's record on climate change Sunday as milder temperatures brought hope of a respite from wildfires that have ravaged three states, claiming 24 lives and destroying almost 2,000 homes.

Morrison has faced widespread criticism for taking a family vacation in Hawaii at the start of the wildfire crisis, his sometimes distracted approach as it has escalated and his slowness in deploying resources.

He was heckled last week when he visited a township in New South Wales in which houses had been destroyed and which was home to one of three volunteer firefighters who have died in the crisis so far.

On Saturday Morrison announced that, for the first time in Australian history, 3,000 army, navy and air force re-

servists will be thrown into the battle against the fires. He also committed \$14 million to leasing fire-fighting aircraft from overseas.

But those decisions attracted complaints that he had taken too long to act as fires have burned through millions of hectares (acres) in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, an area twice the size of Maryland.

Morrison told a news conference Sunday it was not the time for blame.

"There has been a lot of blame being thrown around," Morrison said. "And now is the time to focus on the response that is being made. ... Blame doesn't help anybody at this time and over-analysis of these things is not a productive exercise."

Morrison has been chided for past remarks that appear to minimize the link between climate change and Australia's

escalating threats of drought and wildfires.

"There is no dispute in this country about the issue of climate change globally and its effect on global weather patterns and that includes how it impacts in Australia," he said.

"I have to correct the record here. I have seen a number of people suggest that somehow the government does not make this connection. The government has always made this connection and that has never been in dispute."

Cooler temperatures and lighter winds on Sunday brought some relief to threatened communities, a day after thousands were forced to flee as flames reached the suburban fringes of Sydney.

Thousands of firefighters fought to contain the blazes but many continued to burn out of control, threatening to wipe out rural townships and causing

almost incalculable damage to property and wildlife.

As dawn broke over a blackened landscape Sunday, a picture emerged of disaster of unprecedented scale. The Rural Fire Service said 150 fires were active in the state, 64 of them uncontrolled.

"It's not something we have experienced before," New South Wales Premier Gladys Berejiklian said.

The latest fatality occurred at Batlow in New South Wales, where a 47-year-old man died Saturday night while defending the home of a friend from encroaching fires. New South Wales police said the man was found unconscious in a vehicle and could not be revived.

Earlier Saturday, a father and son who were battling flames for two days died on a highway on Kangaroo Island, off South Australia state. Authorities identified them as Dick Lang, a 78-year-old ac-

claimed bush pilot and outback safari operator, and his 43-year-old son, Clayton. Their family said their losses left them "heartbroken and reeling from this double tragedy."

Lang, known as "Desert Dick," led tours for travelers throughout Australia and other countries.

The deadly wildfires, which have been raging since September, have already burned about 5 million hectares (12.35 million acres) of land. That's more than any one year in the U.S. since Harry Truman was president.

The early and devastating start to Australia's summer wildfires has also been catastrophic for the country's wildlife, likely killing nearly 500 million birds, reptiles and mammals in New South Wales alone, Sydney University ecologist Chris Dickman told the Sydney Morning Herald. Frogs, bats and insects are

excluded from his estimate, making the toll on animals much greater.

Morrison's handling of the deployment of reservists also came in for criticism Sunday. Rural Fire Service Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons, who is leading the fight in New South Wales, said he learned of the deployment through media reports.

"It is fair to say it was disappointing and some surprise to hear about these things through public announcements in the middle of what was one of our worst days this season with the second-highest number of concurrent emergency warning fires ever in the history of New South Wales," he said.

Morrison was also forced to defend a video posted on social media Saturday, which promoted the deployment of reservists and the government's response to the wildfires.



The sky above Bethells Beach on the west coast near Auckland turns orange as smoke from the Australia wildfires arrives in New Zealand, Sunday, Jan. 5, 2020.

AP

Carlos Ghosn lawyer outraged by Japan's justice system and escape

TOKYO (AP)—A lawyer for former Nissan Chairman Carlos Ghosn said Saturday that he felt outraged and betrayed by his client's escape from Japan to Lebanon, but also expressed an understanding for his feelings of not being able to get a fair trial.

"My anger gradually began to turn to something else," Takashi Takano wrote in his blog post.

Referring to Japan's judicial system, he said, "I was betrayed, but the one who betrayed me is not Carlos Ghosn."

Takano described how Ghosn had been barred from seeing his wife, in what Takano called a violation of human rights, and how Ghosn worried whether he would get a fair trial because of prosecutors' leaks to the media and the prospect that the legal process may take years.

Ghosn, who was awaiting trial in Japan on financial mis-

conduct charges, was last seen on surveillance video leaving his Tokyo home alone on Dec. 29, presumably to board his getaway plane.

Although the security cameras at his home were on 24 hours a day, the footage was only required to be submitted to the court once a month, on the 15th, according to lawyers' documents detailing Ghosn's bail conditions.

Takano, the main lawyer on Ghosn's team in charge of his bail, acknowledged that most suspects would not be able to pull off an escape like Ghosn's. But if they could, "they certainly would have tried," he said.

Takano said he told Ghosn that in all the cases he has handled, there has been none in which the evidence was so scant, and that the chances for winning an innocent verdict were winning an innocent verdict were good, even if the trial was not fair.

60 dead in landslides, flash floods in Indonesia's capital

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Landslides and floods triggered by torrential downpours have left at least 60 people dead in and around Indonesia's capital, as rescuers struggled to search for people apparently buried under tons of mud, officials said Saturday.

Monsoon rains and rising rivers submerged a dozen districts in the greater Jakarta area and caused landslides that buried at least a dozen people.

National Disaster Mitigation Agency spokesman Agus Wibowo said most of the fatalities included those who had drowned or been electrocuted since rivers broke their banks early Wednesday after extreme torrential rains hit on New Year's Eve. Three elderly people died of hypothermia.

It's the worst flooding in the area since 2007, when 80 people were killed over 10 days.

Rescuers recovered more bodies as flash floods and mudslides destroyed several

villages in Lebak, a district in neighboring Banten province, Wibowo said. Rescuers were still searching for two villagers reportedly missing in the landslide, he said.

The number of fatalities was expected to increase, with rescuers and villagers also searching for at least three people believed to be buried in another landslide in Cigugur village in Bogor district, said Ridwan, the village's secretary, who goes by a single name.

Ridwan said bad weather, blackouts and mudslides were hampering rescue efforts. He said rescuers on Saturday managed to reach eight hamlets that had been isolated for days by cut-off roads and mudslides and rescued more than 1,700 villagers in weak condition.

Four days after the region of 30 million people was struck by flash floods, waters have receded in many middle-class



waters which submerged much of the city up to 2 meters (6.5 feet) high were receded.

Indonesia's Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agency said that more downpours were forecast for the capital in the coming days, and that the potential for extreme rainfall will continue until next month across the vast archipelago nation. The government on Friday started cloud seeding in an attempt to divert rain clouds from reaching greater Jakarta to prevent possible flooding, the agency said.

Indonesia is hit by deadly floods each year, and Jakarta, the capital of Southeast Asia's largest economy, is not immune. But this year's floods have been particularly bad, with about 397,000 people seeking refuge in shelters across the greater metropolitan area as floodwaters reached up to 6 meters (19 feet) in some places.

World

Soleimani's body arrives in Iran as Trump issues new threats

Mourners carry the coffins of Iran's Gen. Qassem Soleimani and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, deputy commander of Iran-backed militias at the Imam Ali shrine in Najaf, Iraq, Saturday, Jan. 4, 2020. AP

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—The body of Gen. Qassem Soleimani, who was killed in a U.S. drone strike, arrived Sunday in Iran to throngs of mourners, as President Donald Trump threatened to bomb 52 sites in the Islamic Republic if Tehran retaliates by attacking Americans.

Soleimani's death Friday in Iraq further heightens tensions between Tehran and Washington after months of trading attacks and threats that put the wider Middle East on edge. The conflict is rooted in Trump pulling out of Iran's nuclear deal with world powers, an accord likely to further unravel as Tehran is expected to announce as early as Sunday it will break another set of limits.

Iran has promised "harsh revenge." Already, a series of rockets launched in Baghdad late Saturday fell inside or near the Green Zone, which houses government offices and foreign embassies, including the U.S. Embassy.

Trump wrote on Twitter afterward that the U.S. had already "targeted 52 Iranian sites (representing the 52 American hostages taken by Iran many years ago), some at a very high level & important to Iran & the Iranian culture."

Trump did not identify the targets but added that they would be "HIT VERY FAST AND VERY HARD."

After thousands in Baghdad on Saturday mourned Soleimani and others killed in the strike, authorities flew the general's body to the southwestern Iranian city of Ahvaz, according to the state-run IRNA news agency. An honor guard stood by early Sunday as mourners carried the flag-draped coffins of Soleimani and other Guard members off the tarmac.

Officials brought Soleimani's body to Ahvaz, a city that was a focus of fighting during the bloody, 1980-88 war between Iraq and Iran in which the general slowly grew to prominence. After that war, Soleimani

joined the Guard's newly formed Quds, or Jerusalem, Force, an expeditionary force that works with Iranian proxy forces in countries like Iraq, Lebanon and Yemen.

Authorities also plan to take Soleimani's body to Mashhad later Sunday, as well as Tehran and Qom on Monday for public mourning processions, then onto his hometown of Kerman for burial Tuesday.

Soleimani was the architect of Iran's regional policy of mobilizing militias across Iraq, Syria and Lebanon, including in the war against the Islamic State group. He was also blamed for attacks on U.S. troops and American allies going back decades.

Though it's unclear how or when Iran may respond, any retaliation was likely to come after three days of mourning declared in both Iran and Iraq. All eyes were on Iraq, where America and Iran have competed for influence since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion.

After the airstrike early Friday, the U.S.-led coalition has scaled back operations and boosted "security and defensive measures" at bases hosting coalition forces in Iraq, a coalition official said on condition of anonymity according to regulations.

Meanwhile, the U.S. has dispatched another 3,000 troops to neighboring Kuwait, the latest in a series of deployments in recent months as the standoff with Iran has worsened. Protesters held demonstrations in dozens of U.S. cities Saturday over Trump's decisions to kill Soleimani and deploy more troops to the Mideast.

In a thinly veiled threat, one of the Iran-backed militia, Asaib Ahl al-Haq, or League of the Righteous, called on Iraqi security forces to stay at least a kilometer (0.6 miles) away from U.S. bases starting Sunday night. However, U.S. troops are invariably based in Iraqi military posts alongside local forces.

Al-Shabab claims attack on base serving US, Kenyan troops

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—The al-Shabab extremist group says it has attacked a military base used by U.S. and Kenyan troops in coastal Kenya. Kenya's military says the attempted pre-dawn breach was repulsed and at least four attackers were killed.

A witness reports a plume of black smoke rising above the base and says residents are reporting a car bomb exploded.

The U.S. Africa Command confirms the attack on Camp Simba in Lamu county. An internal Kenyan police report seen by The Associated Press says two fixed-wing aircraft, one U.S. and one Kenyan, were destroyed along with two U.S. helicopters and multiple U.S. vehicles at the Manda Bay military airstrip.

The al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab is based in neighboring Somalia and has launched a number of attacks in Kenya. Al-Shabab has been the target of a growing number of U.S. airstrikes during President Donald Trump's administration.

An al-Shabab statement Sunday asserted that it had inflicted casualties in the raid on the military base in Manda Bay, near the border with Somalia, and destroyed U.S. military equipment, including aircraft.

"The airstrip is safe," the Kenyan military statement said. "Arising from the unsuccessful breach a fire broke out affecting some of the fuel tanks located at the airstrip."

WORLD BRIEFS

Death toll from airstrike in Libya's Tripoli climbs to 30

CAIRO (AP)—The death toll from an airstrike that slammed into a military academy in Libya's capital climbed to at least 30 people, most of them students, health authorities said Sunday. Tripoli has been the scene of fighting since April between the self-styled Libyan National Army led by Gen. Khalifa Hifter and an array of militias loosely allied with the weak but U.N.-supported government that holds the capital. The airstrike took place late Saturday in the capital's Hadaba area, just south of the city center where fighting has been raging for months. The ambulance service in Tripoli said the airstrike also wounded at least 33 others. It posted images of

dead bodies and wounded people being treated at a hospital. The U.N. Support Mission in Libyan condemned in "the strongest terms" the attack. The Tripoli-based government blamed the airstrike on the self-styled Libyan National Army. A spokesman for the LNA did not respond to phone calls seeking comment. The fighting for Tripoli escalated in recent weeks after Hifter declared a "final" and decisive battle for the capital. That followed a military and maritime agreement Tripoli authorities signed with their ally Turkey calling for the deployment of Turkish troops to Libya. The fighting has threatened to plunge Libya into violence and chaos rivaling the 2011 conflict that ousted and later killed its ruler Moammar Gadhafi. The country

is now divided between the U.N.-supported administration in the west, and a rival government in the east aligned with the LNA.

Venezuela's Guaidó faces key test in leadership vote

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaidó faces an internal test of his authority in a key vote Sunday as he campaigns to oust President Nicolás Maduro and end Venezuela's economic and humanitarian crisis. The opposition-controlled National Assembly will decide whether to keep Guaidó as its leader for a second year. Guaidó will also come under pressure to articulate a fresh vision for removing Maduro — something he has

not been able to accomplish. "The big question for this year is whether Guaidó will be able to use his waning political strength to guide his coalition through such a rocky period," said Geoff Ramsey, a researcher at the Washington Office on Latin America research center. "Opposition unity is already fraying at the edges, and the armed forces appear less likely than ever to abandon Maduro." Guaidó declared presidential powers over Venezuela on Jan. 23, 2019, saying Maduro's reelection was illegitimate because the most popular opposition parties and political leaders had been disqualified from running. The U.S. and more than 50 other nations declared Maduro's leadership invalid and endorsed Guaidó.

Focus

Was the drone attack on Iranian general an assassination?

By JOHN DANISZEWSKI
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK (AP)—After Friday's targeted killing of Iranian Gen. Qasem Soleimani, newsrooms struggled with the question: Had the United States just carried out an assassination? And should news stories about the killing use that term?

The AP Stylebook, considered a news industry bible, defines assassination as "the murder of a politically important or prominent individual by surprise attack."

Although the United States and Iran have long been adversaries and engaged in a shadow war in the Middle East and elsewhere, the U.S. has never declared formal war on Iran. So the targeted killing of a high Iranian state and military official by a surprise attack was "clearly an assassination," said Mary Ellen O'Connell, an expert in international law and the laws of war at the University of Notre Dame School of Law.

Just as clearly, the Trump administration doesn't agree.

Though a statement issued by the Pentagon said the attack was specifically intended to kill Soleimani and that it was ordered "at the direction of the President," it also characterized the killing as defensive, to protect U.S. military forces abroad, and stated that Soleimani was actively developing plans "to attack American diplomats and service members in Iraq and throughout the region." Subsequent statements by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and President Donald Trump also characterized the killing as punishment of Soleimani for past blood on his hands.

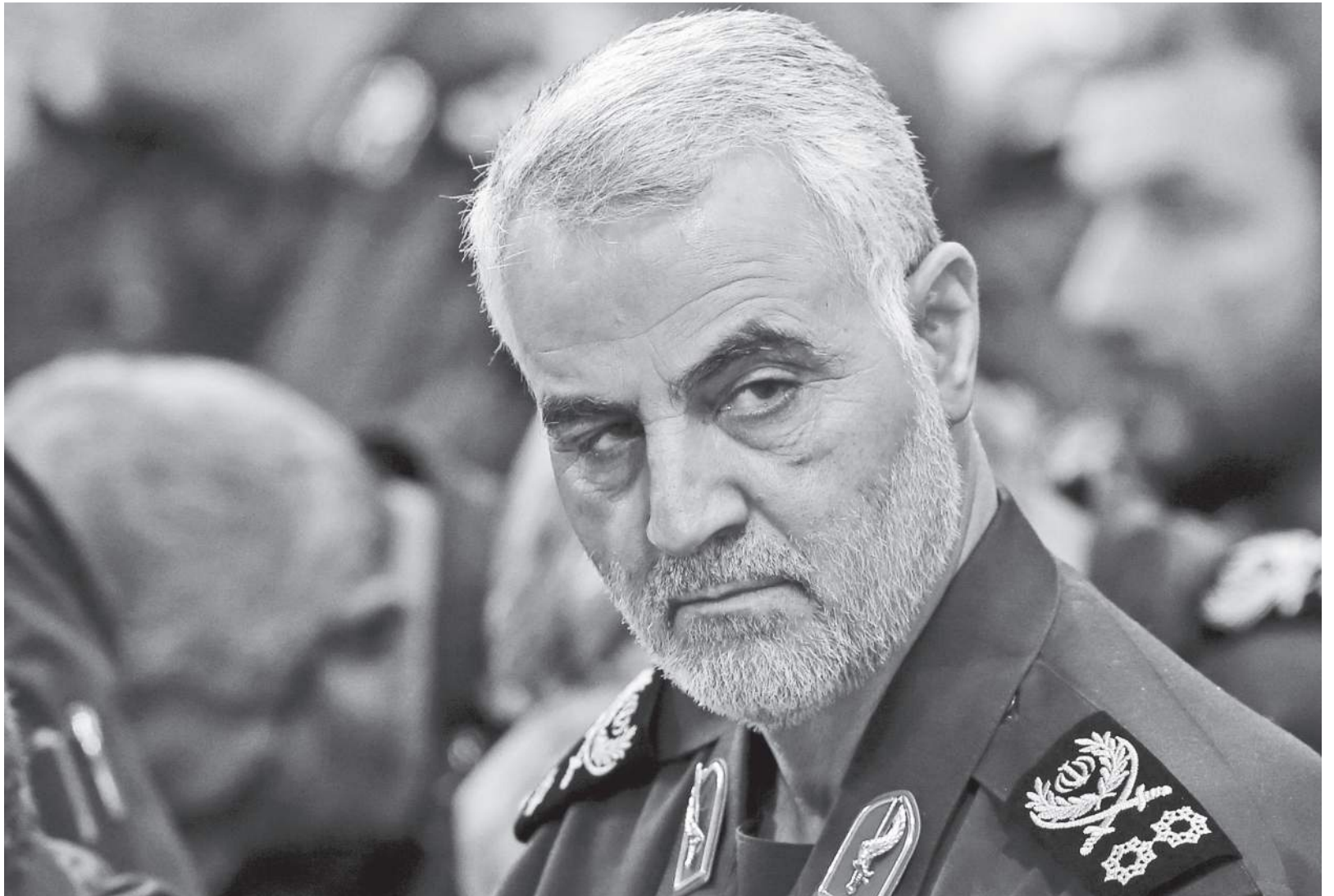
O'Connell's counterargument: Whether the killing is framed as part of an armed conflict between two states or as a police action intended to deter terrorism, it cannot be characterized as an act of self-defense because there was never a full-fledged and direct attack on the United States by Iran. The United States's legal reason for being in Iraq is to deter the Islamic State group, not to fight against Iran, she noted, and the attacks against the U.S. by Iranian-backed militias in recent months have been intermittent and relatively limited.

"Assassination is prohibited both in peacetime law as well as on the battlefield," she said.

"We have really moved to a nearly lawless state," she said. If the justification for a military response is self-defense, the response should be "necessary and proportionate." But that would not justify individual targeted killings, she said.

For Iran, Soleimani's killing was a "horrific assassination," wrote Majid Takht Ravanchi, Iran's ambassador to the United Nations.

It is "an obvious example of state terrorism, and, as a criminal act, constitutes a gross violation of the fundamental principles of international law," Ravanchi wrote in a letter to the U.N. secretary-general.

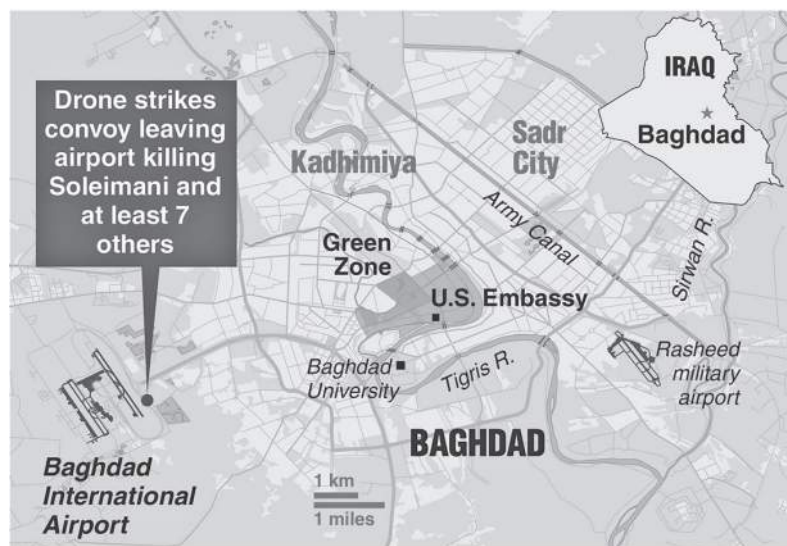


In this Sept. 18, 2016 photo released by an official website of the office of the Iranian supreme leader, Revolutionary Guard Gen. Qasem Soleimani, center, attends a meeting with Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and Revolutionary Guard commanders in Tehran, Iran.

AP

U.S. kills top Iranian general

Iran's most powerful military commander, General Qasem Soleimani, was killed at Baghdad airport, along with other militia figures, early Friday in an airstrike ordered by U.S.



Who is General Qasem Soleimani?

- The head of Iran's elite Quds Force and the architect of Tehran's proxy wars in the Middle East
- Quds Force members have deployed into Syria's long war to support President Bashar Assad, as well as into Iraq in the wake of the 2003 U.S. invasion that toppled dictator Saddam Hussein

• 62-year-old Soleimani rose to prominence by advising forces fighting the Islamic State group in Iraq and in Syria on behalf of the embattled Assad

• The Defense Department said it killed Soleimani because he "was actively developing plans to attack American diplomats and service members in Iraq and throughout the region"

The premeditated killing of a specific individual commander for what they have done on the battlefield or what they may do has been prohibited by the law of armed conflict dating from the Hague Conventions of 1907, and by a protocol of the Geneva Convention in 1949 saying "it is prohibited to kill, injure or capture an adversary by perfidy," she added.

International war law aside, there also has been a U.S. executive order in place since 1976 forbidding the U.S. from carrying out political assassinations. The order came into being after revelations that the CIA had organized or sanctioned assassination attempts against foreign leaders including Fidel Castro.

The current version of the executive order states: "No person employed by or acting on behalf of the United States Government shall engage in, or conspire to engage in, assassination."

It does not however define what constitutes an assassination, and has been generally interpreted to mean an unlawful killing of a political leader in peacetime. For instance, during the "war on terror" since 9/11, the United States is believed to have conducted a number of secret drone strikes targeting individuals, such as the attack against al-Qaida propagandist Anwar al-Awlaki, who was killed in 2011 in Yemen.

Soleimani, however, was a military leader. If he was leading forces against the United States, under the international laws of war as enunciated in the 1949 Geneva Conventions,

he and his forces could be considered legitimate battle targets during any actual war or armed conflict, declared or undeclared.

The AP has mostly refrained from describing Soleimani's death as an assassination—both because it would require that the news service decide that the act was a murder, and because the term is politically freighted.

Duke University Professor of Law Madeleine Morris, an expert on international criminal law, said the law is not terribly clear in this area.

She said that under the United Nations Charter, there is a clear right of self-defense in response to armed attacks. She noted that some might argue that the attacks the U.S. has experienced in this case do not meet at a threshold of gravity to justify this sort of targeted killing, while others would argue to the contrary that there is no explicit threshold—that if attacked a country has an absolute right to respond militarily.

"There is no obligation to kill a lot of people rather than a single person," she said.

The question then would be whether the act of war was legal, allowed as self-defense, or would it be considered an illegal act of aggression? That would depend on the intelligence evidence offered by the United States and the imminence of any planned attack.

"The problem is that governments have good reason to make very little public in this situation, which makes it very difficult to evaluate the situation politically or legally."

Source: AP, BBC
Graphic: Staff, Tribune News Service

Health & Wellness

This advertorial
is sponsored by



Tan Siu Lin
Foundation

Like millions of women before me, I spent most of my life struggling with body-image issues. Countless precious years consumed by diets, worries about weight and after it all, my body shape has pretty much stayed the same. My physical health is great, but it has taken me until my 40s to start to shake the psychological impact of what I know now is called “diet culture.”

Diet culture is a system of values and beliefs that permeate our society and instruct us that shrinking ourselves into smaller bodies will lead to better health outcomes. It believes that those who are striving to make their bodies smaller are more disciplined and more worthy than those who don't. Diet culture dictates that there is “bad” food and “good” food and that shame and guilt around food are important to keep us “on track.”

The diet culture Goliath has had the upper hand since the turn of the last century and it has led 45 million people each year to pursue diets that are almost inevitably going to fail to shrink their bodies for more than a short time. But a movement has emerged to fight back.

Known as “body positivity” or “fat acceptance,” writers, researchers, bloggers and influencers are creating new cultural norms that emphasize the beauty of all bodies, the value of Health At Every Size (HAES), and radical self-love.

Body-positivity activists and HAES proponents argue that like height, eye or skin color, humans come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Body shape and BMI are not accurate predictors of health—you can be a marathoner in a larger body and ill in a smaller one. Discrimination and stigma toward larger bodies in diet culture actually leads to poorer health outcomes, as people delay health care due to fat shaming in medical settings as well as doctors attributing every ailment to weight. HAES advocates argue that we should take a holistic approach to our health, one that recognizes that being at war with our bodies saps our human po-



A movement, known as “body positivity” or “fat acceptance,” writers, researchers, bloggers and influencers are creating new cultural norms that emphasize the beauty of all bodies, the value of Health At Every Size (HAES), and radical self-love.

DREAMSTIME/TNS

2020 The year to ditch diet culture

By NAOMI ISHISAKA
THE SEATTLE TIMES

tential and does not serve our mental health or well-being.

Perhaps the unintentional reigning queen of this empowerment movement is Lizzo, the self-described “fat bitch” who was just named Time magazine's entertainer of the year. Lizzo's unapologetic message of confidence, independence and self-

love has inspired a legion of fans.

One of those fans is 12-year-old Taylor Freeman, who said in fifth grade, other students at her school created an unauthorized online poll that ranked Freeman as one of the fattest kids in class. The cruelty of the students hurt Freeman's feelings at the time, but not for long. In sixth

grade, Freeman started to see Lizzo and other larger-bodied people in the media and on stage and it opened her mind to new possibilities. One highlight of her life so far was having Lizzo point to her at the 2019 Capitol Hill Block Party and say that Freeman reminded her of herself when she was a child.

The singer made a big impression. “I realized it doesn't really matter,” Freeman said. “Being fat doesn't stop you from doing anything. (Lizzo) has sold out shows, a lot of people love her and she's also fat. We're all human beings. And when it comes down to it, you can't discriminate against other people just because they look a different way ... and even if you try to tear them down, it only matters how you feel about yourself.”

But I know what some of you are probably thinking: We have an obesity epidemic in this country and we need diet culture to help fight it! It is received wisdom that the U.S. “obesity epidemic” is responsible for increased diabetes, heart disease, cancer and a multitude of other health issues. Encouraging weight loss, then, would seem to be a logical and appropriate response to this crisis. Christy Harrison, the author of the new book “Anti-Diet,” argues that looking to diet culture for solutions to improve health is misguided at best and harmful at worst.

Researchers are finally digging deeper into the difference between correlation and causality when it comes to body size and health and some research is reinforcing what Harrison and others have been arguing for years about health: that your level of activity, nutritious foods and social determinants of health, such as walkable communities, matter most. Everyone, regardless of body size, benefits from those choices, but repeated weight loss and gain (or weight cycling) is harmful.

The battle to change the U.S. obsession with diet culture is far from won. It's a generational affliction, passed down from mom to daughter, from cookie-shaming co-worker to co-worker, from doctor to patient. Fat shaming is one of the last socially acceptable forms of discrimination in our country.

But maybe if we could ask more critical questions about diet culture, we might end up with a generation of Taylor Freemans and Lizzos, who know their worth and their health is not determined by a number on a scale.

Q&A:

For most people,
drinking plain
water is the
best way to
stay hydrated

Plain water is the best way to stay hydrated for most people.

DREAMSTIME/TNS



Q I've heard that alkaline water is better at rehydrating your body than non-alkaline, or plain, water. Is this true?

A In short, for most people, plain water is better. But first, it's important to understand the definition of alkaline water. Scientists use pH to describe how acidic or basic a substance is, with a range from 0 to 14. Pure water has a pH of 7, meaning it's neutral. Fluids with a pH under 7, such as coffee and soda, are acidic. Substances with a pH over 7, such as baking soda, are basic, or alkaline.

Alkaline waters have a pH around 8 or 9. Some vendors use water that has a naturally higher pH, while others say that they create alkaline water through an ionization process.

Alkaline water companies make a

host of claims, saying it's better at rehydrating the body, and that it will detoxify and “balance” your body, help you lose weight, and prevent or even treat cancer. However, there's little credible research showing that alkaline water benefits your health in any important way. In general, be wary of promoted research on alkaline water, as some of these studies are small or funded by alkaline water companies.

Some studies also suggest that alkaline water might help slow bone loss, but further investigation is needed to determine if this influences overall bone mineral density and if the benefit is maintained over the long term.

Often, claims about the benefits of alkaline water rest on the argument that modern diets make our bloodstreams and bodies too acidic. This is misleading. Regardless of what

you eat or drink, your body is good at regulating your blood pH through organs such as your lungs and kidneys. It's possible to have excess acid in your body fluids—what is known as acidosis—but this is generally caused by a serious condition such as a chronic disease involving the lungs or kidneys.

Many people don't drink enough water, and they may feel better after increasing hydration through alkaline water. However, it's probably not the alkaline nature of the water that's of benefit; it's the water. You can save money and hydrate your body perfectly fine simply by drinking plain water. (*Mayo Clinic News Network*)

Katherine Zeratsky, R.D.N., Endocrinology/Nutrition, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minn.

Life & Style

McGowan and Arquette reflect as Weinstein trial approaches

Rose McGowan doesn't plan to be in the courtroom when Harvey Weinstein's criminal trial starts next week. One of Weinstein's most prominent accusers, McGowan says the trauma the fallen Hollywood mogul caused her is so great she couldn't bear the pain of it.

But Rosanna Arquette, another accuser, has already made plans to be there when it starts, to lend support to the women who have accused Weinstein of sexual assault and plan to testify against him.

"I feel very protective. I want this to be OK," Arquette said in an interview. "I think either way, whatever happens, it's still going to be hard for

the people that came forward, in terms of retaliation. He's all about that."

Both McGowan and Arquette spoke to The Associated Press in separate interviews on Friday about the upcoming trial of Weinstein, the once all-powerful Hollywood producer whose world came crashing down in 2017 when parallel investigations by The New York Times and The New Yorker documented alleged sexual misconduct by Weinstein against dozens of women. From Oscar-winning stars to aspiring actresses to associates, claims of sexual harassment, assault and even rape were leveled against Weinstein.

Prosecutors in New York have filed five criminal charg-

es against Weinstein, including two counts of predatory sexual assault that carry a mandatory life sentence.

Weinstein, 67, has denied allegations of non-consensual sex and his lawyer has promised a vigorous defense. Jury selection is expected to begin on Monday.

McGowan has accused Weinstein of raping her over 20 years ago and destroying her career; Weinstein has denied her claims. A representative for Weinstein sent a link to McGowan's remarks on Iran and said his team was declining comment.

Since the allegations against Weinstein sparked the #MeToo movement, McGowan has



Weinstein

emerged as a vigorous advocate for sexual assault victims. Though she told the AP in 2018 she would be at any trial, McGowan now says while she might be outside the courtroom when it starts, she couldn't imagine being on the inside.

"I also have to focus on what's healthy mentally for me and seeing him is extremely difficult," she said. "You know, I had body flashbacks for years when I would see and receive photos of him or if I saw him in person, I would lean over and throw up in a trash can and my body remembered, you know, things that my brain wanted to silence."

McGowan said seeing

Weinstein face criminal charges "will speak volumes to people in the world that have been hurt. And I hope it gets justice for the women involved. Personally, I have justice. My justice might just look different than that."

She added that if Weinstein is found guilty of even one charge, "it's a victory, but it's also a victory to still be standing after all this damn time. It's also a victory to spread the news to other survivors, that is not our shame. It's also a victory to basically have him as the face of rape for all time."

Arquette has accused Weinstein of derailing her career after she resisted her advances, and was one of first women to come forward and tell her story in 2017 (Weinstein has

also denied retaliating against women who refused to have sex with him). She told the AP she never thought she would see the day that he would face a trial for his alleged crimes.

Arquette was emotional as she talked about his upcoming trial and what it represented.

"This is a man that is a real predator," she said. "He's destroyed many women's lives. ... We need to keep the focus on this crime, and this case with Harvey Weinstein is huge because so many people are looking at it."

Arquette is close friends with one of the women expected to testify against Weinstein: actress Annabella Sciorra, who has accused Weinstein of raping her more than two decades ago. (AP)



This combination photo shows, from left, Lulu Wang, director of "The Farewell," Greta Gerwig, director of "Little Women," Lorene Scafaria, director of "Hustlers," and Melina Matsoukas, director of "Queen & Slim." AP

Study finds 2019 was a 'banner year' for female filmmakers

NEW YORK (AP)—Lulu Wang, Lorene Scafaria, Melina Matsoukas and Greta Gerwig led Hollywood to a record year for women in the director's chair. In 2019, women directed more of the most popular movies than any year before.

Women directed 12 of 2019's top 100-grossing films in 2019, according to a study released Thursday by USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative. That percentage of female filmmakers, 10.6%, is greater than researchers have recorded before, suggesting that some measure of change is finally coming to a film industry where inequality behind the camera has remained stubbornly persistent.

It's the most meaningful increase in several decades for female directors. Despite mounting outcry, the rate of female directors helming Hollywood's top productions has long been largely stagnant. The previous high in USC's annual study was 8%, in 2008. In 2018, only 4.5% of the year's top films were directed by women.

"This is the first time we have seen a shift in hiring

practices for female film directors in 13 years," said Stacy L. Smith, one of the study's authors. "One notable reason for this jump in 2019 was that Universal Pictures had five films with women directors at the helm in the top 100 movies. Yet there is still much more progress needed to reach parity for women behind the camera."

The high-profile success of several films had already made 2019 a historic one for women. Those include Wang's "The Farewell," one of the year's most popular indie releases, Scafaria's acclaimed "Hustlers" (\$105 million domestically), Matsoukas' "Queen & Slim" (\$40.7 million) and Gerwig's "Little Women," which last week opened strongly with \$29 million in its first five days of release.

"Frozen II," with \$1.2 billion in worldwide ticket sales, is close to setting a new box-office record for a movie directed by a woman. Jennifer Lee, who co-directed the film, set the record with the first "Frozen" film. In 2018, Lee became the chief creative officer of Walt Disney Animation Studios.

Other notable films included Kasi Lemmons' "Harriet," Tina Gordon's "Little" and Jill Culton's "Abominable."

USC researchers singled out Universal Pictures, which put forward a slate of films with 26% directed by women. Universal is the only major studio with a female studio chief, Donna Langley.

Netflix also fared well. While the streaming company's films largely bypass theaters—leaving them outside the study's parameters—20% of Netflix's 2019 movies were directed by women.

Paramount Pictures, however, hasn't released a movie directed by a woman in the last five years.

Four women of color directed one of the top 100 movies in 2019, though the overall statistics for underrepresented directors dipped. Underrepresented filmmakers were behind 16.8% of films in 2019, a decline from last year's 21.4%, a record.

"While 2019 is a banner year for women, we will not be able to say there is true change until all women have access and opportunity to work at this level," said Smith.

Rose McGowan defends tweet apologizing to Iran after strike

NEW YORK (AP)—Rose McGowan's tweet that apologized on behalf of the U.S. to Iran for "disrespecting their flag and people" in the wake of an airstrike that killed the country's top general was not anti-American, the actress said in the face of harsh criticism.

"I don't support Iran over America. I want America to be better," McGowan said during an exclusive interview with The Associated Press on Friday.

Her tweet read: "Dear #Iran, The USA has disrespected your country, your flag, your people. 52% of us humbly apologize. We want peace with your nation. We are being held hostage by a terrorist regime. We do not know how to escape. Please do not kill us."

The head of Iran's elite Quds force and mastermind of its regional security strategy, Gen. Qassem Soleimani, was killed in a U.S. airstrike early Friday. The attack has caused regional tensions to soar.

She faced outrage over Friday's Twitter post, with some suggesting she move to Iran. McGowan acknowledged that her tweet was unusual.

"I woke up, I stupidly looked at Twitter. I was going to the bathroom, and I was like, 'what?'" She added that she doesn't believe the governments of either Iran or the U.S.

"So, I just thought I would do something a little strange or unusual ... bloodshed should be avoided if you can," she said. "And I kind of just thought, what if I take a really bizarre way around this. A

very strange thought, I understand."

McGowan, 46, who is known for her role in the "Scream" movie franchise, was one of the earliest of dozens of women to accuse Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein of sexual misconduct, making her a major figure in the #MeToo movement. Jury selection is scheduled to start this week in New York in a sexual assault case against Weinstein based



McGowan

on allegations from two other women. Weinstein has pleaded not guilty in that case and denies any maintains any sexual activity was consensual.

McGowan has filed a federal lawsuit alleging Weinstein and two of his former attorneys engaged in racketeering to silence her and derail her career as she prepared to accuse him of rape. An attorney for the mogul has called the suit meritless.

MESSAGE OF APPRECIATION

† Vicente Reyes Dela Cruz

We would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to our relatives and friends for all their prayers, words of comfort, and support throughout our time of sorrow. Also to CHCC (Hemo Dialysis doctor and nurses), Borja Funeral Home, Diocese of Chalan Kanoa, San Jose Parish, Father Sid Ogumorro, Altar servers, Merle, Milli's Choir and group.

Although we mourn the passing of our beloved †Vicente, we also rejoice to the end of his sufferings and the beginning of his new life in paradise.

Let us continue to pray for each other for love, hope, and peace. From our hearts, thank you, un dankulo na si yu'us ma'ase yan ghilisow, for all your love, prayers, and kindness.

The Family

T.S. Eliot letters show love for muse but poet downplays it

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Recently unveiled letters from T.S. Eliot to his muse Emily Hale show how much he loved his longtime friend, but a statement from beyond the grave by the poet himself dismisses his feelings and shows how Eliot tries to rewrite the narrative of their relationship, scholars say.

Hale donated Eliot's letters to Princeton University Library more than 60 years ago with instructions that they could only be opened 50 years after she and Eliot died.

The day they were made available at the Ivy League school, Eliot's statement, written five years before his death, was released—as per his own instructions.

In it, Eliot downplays his love for Hale.

"I came to see that my love for Emily was the love of a ghost for a ghost," he wrote.

Eliot scholar Frances Dickey, who was among the first to read the letters at the New Jersey school Thursday, said it was "unfortunate" that Eliot felt he had to deny his feelings for Hale.

"That seemed a little harsh," Dickey said. "She was his muse for many years."

Letters to Hale from 1930—contained in the first of 14 boxes—show Eliot confessing



In this Oct. 14, 2019, photo, letters between poet T.S. Eliot and longtime confidante Emily Hale are displayed in Princeton, N.J. Thursday, Jan. 2, 2020 marks the first day that students, researchers and scholars can go to the Ivy League school in New Jersey to see these letters that many are saying may reveal more intimate details about Eliot's life and work. AP

his love for her.

"They are extremely passionate," Dickey said. "It's really more than what I expected. They are very emotional, claiming that she inspired a lot of his poetry. She obviously played a really important role in his poetic life."

Dickey said it's become more obvious that the "hyacinth girl" in "The Waste Land," Eliot's most famous poem, is Hale.

Also among the boxes of letters is a manuscript Hale wrote about their relationship. Her account and his early let-

ters trace the same narrative, Dickey said.

In his statement, Eliot does admit he once loved Hale.

"I fell in love with Emily Hale in 1912," he wrote. He told her so two years later.

"I have no reason to believe, from the way in which this

declaration was received, that my feelings were returned," Eliot wrote.

He married his first wife, Vivienne Haigh-Wood, in 1915, a year after his declaration. The two had a tumultuous, loveless marriage marred by Haigh-Wood's mental illness and alleged infidelity. They separated in 1933.

"Emily Hale would have killed the poet in me; Vivienne nearly was the death of me, but she kept the poet alive," Eliot wrote.

Hale eventually developed feelings for Eliot, but the poet writes that, as time went on, he realized "more and more how little Emily Hale and I had in common."

"It may be too harsh, to think that what she liked was my reputation rather than my work," he wrote.

Eliot scholar Anthony Cuda called that a "cold and untrue statement."

"He pursued her," he said. "His earliest letters were ardent declarations of love. It's not as if she chased after him."

In other letters, Eliot comments on the pain and happiness of intimacy, according to Dickey, and even confesses his craving for alcohol and reveals details about his private life.

Hundreds of letters still need to be read; only a few

copies can be seen at a time at the library, and there are no copies available online.

There are a few different reasons Eliot might be trying to rewrite history, the scholars say. Hale donated the letters while the two were still alive, and Eliot feared they might be released before the embargo date. Eliot had ordered the letters he'd received from Hale destroyed.

"He was looking back on this and felt embarrassed and ashamed at the openness and vulnerability he allowed to come through at the time," Cuda said. "He tried to do damage control."

But he also wanted to protect his second wife, Valerie, whom he calls his one true love.

"But it's a strange protectiveness," Cuda said. "He was so devoted to Valerie and she to him. What the Emily Hale letters reveal—(Valerie) wasn't the unique love of his life. He had a unique and tense experience before her."

The letters could reveal much more about Eliot's private and poetic life and are already making waves among the literary community. Cuda called them "all we could have hoped for."

"What we want to do as consumers of the lives of others is simply understand them," he said. "As usual, Eliot won't be simplified."

Rod Stewart, son, accused of battery in New Year's Eve fight

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP)—Rock icon Rod Stewart and his son are facing simple battery charges after an altercation with a security guard during a private event in a children's area at The Breakers hotel in Palm Beach on New Year's Eve, according to court records.

Security guard Jessie Dixon told Palm Beach police officers that Stewart's group was at the check-in table for a private party that they weren't authorized to attend,

a police report said.

Dixon said the group became loud and began causing a scene. Dixon, 33, told investigators he put his hand on the younger Stewart's chest and told him to back up and make space, the report said.

That's when Sean Stewart, the rock star's 39-year-old son, got "nose to nose" with Dixon.

Sean Stewart then shoved Dixon backwards. Rod Stewart, 74, punched Dixon in his "left rib cage area" with a

closed fist, the report said.

The police report said Sean Stewart told investigators he became agitated when they were not able to attend the event "due to Dixon's interaction with him and his family."

Two Breakers employees who were working the private event told police police they saw Sean Stewart push Dixon and Rod Stewart punch the guard.

The officer said he viewed security footage at the hotel and determined that the

Stewarts were the "primary aggressors."

Dixon signed an affidavit saying that he wanted to press charges against the Stewarts.

An email seeking comment has not been answered by Stewart's representative.

Rod and Sean Stewart were issued notices to appear in court on Feb. 5.

Both Sean and Rod Stewart are facing simple battery charges and were issued notices to appear in court on Feb. 5.

Josh Duhamel gets new contract to promote North Dakota

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP)—North Dakota will again enlist the help of Hollywood actor Josh Duhamel to help promote tourism in his home state.

North Dakota's tourism department confirmed Tuesday to The Associated Press that the star of several "Transformers" movies will be paid \$175,000 to be the face of the state's tourism campaign for the next two years. The state has had a contract with Duhamel since 2013 to help lure visitors to North Dakota.

The contract extension that expires on Dec. 31, 2021, brings to more than \$1 million Duhamel has received from the state.

Duhamel is from Minot,

a city in the northern part of the state that's about an hour's drive from the United States border with Canada.

The advertising campaign featuring Duhamel is a continuation of the North Dakota Legendary brand that was established in 2002 to help create more awareness of the state.

Although North Dakota is one of the least-visited states in the U.S., tourism is the state's third-largest industry, behind energy and agriculture. The biggest draw is Theodore Roosevelt National Park in western North Dakota's badlands.

State Tourism Division Director Sara Otte Coleman is scheduled to unveil the new two-year advertising cam-

paign next week, said Heather LeMoine, the agency's marketing manager.

The previous \$2.9 million campaign featured Duhamel doing everything from fishing and biking to attending college football and hockey games. Some also include his 6-year-old son Axl, whose mother is Black Eyed Peas singer Fergie. The campaign included TV and print ads, as well as travel and hunting guides.

Duhamel "has spotlighted the state that not many people know about," LeMoine said. "It has definitely paid off."

Ads featuring the 47-year-old actor have mostly appeared in the neighboring states of Minnesota, Wiscon-

sin and the nearby Canadian provinces of Saskatchewan and Manitoba, LeMoine said.

"We don't have the money to do a national campaign," LeMoine said.

North Dakota had 22.6 million visitors in 2018, up more than 5% from the previous year, agency data show. Visitor spending totaled \$3 billion that included \$300 million in state and local taxes, the agency said.

LeMoine said the advertising campaign featuring Duhamel has resulted in more than \$100 for every dollar in state funding spent.

The tourism industry provides about 42,000 jobs in the state, LeMoine said.

Vogue Italia eschews photos for sustainable January issue

ROME (AP)—Vogue Italia has produced its first issue of the new year and decade with an eye on sustainability, substituting fashion illustrations for photographs in an effort to reduce the environmental impact associated with staging fashion photo shoots around the globe.

Editor-in-chief Emanuele Farneti said the January issue was believed to be the first time a Vogue magazine has gone photo-less since photography was invented.

In his editorial, Farneti said the initiative was part of Vogue's new environmentally focused mission statement, which was articulated last month and signed by the editors of all 26 editions of the Conde Nast publication.

Farneti said Vogue Italia's September issue, typically Vogue's biggest of the year, showed how large a fashion magazine's carbon footprint really is and what was conserved for this month's production.

"One hundred and fifty people involved. About twenty flights and a dozen or so train journeys. Forty cars on standby. Sixty international deliveries. Lights

switched on for at least 10 hours non-stop, partly powered by gasoline-fueled generators. Food waste from the catering services. Plastic to wrap the garments. Electricity to recharge phones, cameras..." he wrote.

Vogue Italia's January issue features eight different illustrated covers that involved no travel and articles about clothes that are "re-born" from scrap fabric and hand-me-downs.

Farneti said the savings from producing an issue without costly photo shoots would go toward restoring a Venice student foundation that was severely damaged by high tide floods in November.

The fashion industry has been increasingly going green, with experts saying luxury consumers in particular are willing to pay more for sustainable garments and items that don't exploit workers.

Last year, the McKinsey & Company consultancy projected that the global garment industry would expand by two-thirds by 2030 and be responsible for one-quarter of the global carbon footprint by 2050 compared to 2% in 2015.

US singer Pink pledges \$500K to fight Australia wildfires

Britain's queen in new photo portrait with 3 heirs to throne

LONDON (AP)—Britain's Queen Elizabeth II has marked the start of the decade with a new formal photograph of her and the first three heirs to the throne: son Prince Charles, grandson Prince William and great-grandson Prince George.

The portrait of the four was taken in Buckingham Palace's throne room a week before Christmas. The palace released it on Saturday night.

For the photo, Elizabeth, wearing a white dress with a blue brooch and with a signature handbag hanging from her forearm, stood in the front. Charles posed with an arm around George's shoulder as the two stood next to the queen on a red-carpeted step. William was behind the monarch on her other side.

It's only the second time Buckingham Palace has issued a portrait of the queen and her three heirs together.

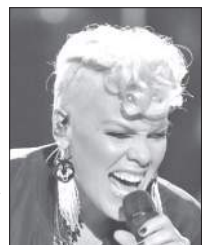
The first, taken by the same photographer, was released 2016 to mark Elizabeth's 90th birthday and used on commemorative stamps.



In this handout photo provided by Buckingham Palace and taken Wednesday Dec. 18, 2019, Britain's Queen Elizabeth, Prince Charles, Prince William and Prince George pose for a photo to mark the start of the new decade in the Throne Room of Buckingham Palace, London. **AP**

SYDNEY (AP)—American pop singer Pink says she is donating \$500,000 to help fight the deadly wildfires that have devastated parts of Australia.

"I am totally devastated watching what is happening in Australia right now with the horrific bushfires," Pink tweeted Saturday to her 32.2 million Twitter followers. "I am pledging a donation of \$500,000 directly



Pink

to the local fire services that are battling so hard on the front-lines. My heart goes out to our friends and family in Oz."

The death toll in the wildfire crisis is now up to 23 people.

The fires are expected to be particularly fierce throughout the weekend.

The wildfires, which have been raging since September, have already burned about 5 million hectares (12.35 million

Rocker John Mellencamp gives \$50K to his Indiana hometown

SEYMOUR, Ind. (AP)—Rocker John Mellencamp has donated \$50,000 to his southern Indiana hometown for construction of a plaza near a mural that pays homage to the singer-songwriter and his 1980s hit "Small Town."

Seymour Mayor Craig Luedeman announced Mellencamp's gift Tuesday at the end of a municipal board meeting before reading a letter from the singer-songwriter, who grew up in the city about 60 miles (96 kilometers) south of Indianapolis.

Mellencamp wrote in the letter that the money is earmarked

for creation of a plaza in a parking lot adjacent to the mural, which is painted on the side of This Old Guitar Music Store, the Seymour Tribune reported.

The mural celebrating Mellencamp's career was completed last fall by Indianapolis artist Pamela Bliss and features a 35-foot (10.6-meter) image of Mellencamp leaning on a guitar, and a smaller image of him wearing a Seymour FFA jacket. It includes the lyrics, "I was born in a small town" from his 1985 hit "Small Town" and a sign noting his Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction.

Cameron Diaz and Benji Madden announce birth of a daughter

Cameron Diaz is starting the new decade with a very important role: mommy.

The actress and her musician husband, Benji Madden, on Friday announced the birth of a daughter they've named Raddix.

"We are so happy, blessed and grateful to begin this new decade by announcing the birth of our daughter," Diaz wrote on Instagram. "She has instantly captured our hearts and completed our family."

But don't expect a photo of the baby. Diaz wrote that while she and Madden "are overjoyed to share this news" they "also feel a strong instinct to protect our little one's privacy." The Instagram post had no image attached.

"We won't be posting pictures or sharing any more details, other than the fact that she is really really cute!"



Diaz

Some would even say RAD," Diaz wrote.

Diaz, whose films include "There's Something About Mary" and "Bad Teacher," married Madden, a member of the band Good Charlotte, in early 2015.

Both parents posted the identical message on Instagram. Representatives for both stars did not immediately respond to calls for comment. **(AP)**

Bill O'Reilly guest spot on TV show not a part of Discovery

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Discovery Channel says a television show featuring Bill O'Reilly is not an official program on their network after receiving backlash for the former Fox News host's appearance on the show amid sexual harassment allegations against him.

A Discovery Channel spokesman said the one-hour episode of "Pet Tales with Greta" appeared on the cable network through paid advertisement Saturday morn-

ing. The show is hosted and co-executive produced by Greta Van Susteren, a cable news veteran and former Fox News anchor.

The cable channel would not say who paid for the episode, but said there are no plans for another one to appear on the network at this time.

"Pet Tales with Greta" focuses on stories about the variety of animals from around the world. Other guests on the show includes NFL Hall of Famer Terry Bradshaw,

actress-singer Katherine McPhee and Howard Stern's wife Beth, who is an animal rights activist.

Fox ousted O'Reilly in 2017 after The New York Times reported that at least five women with professional ties to him had received payouts totaling \$13 million to settle claims of sexual harassment and other misbehavior. The newspaper said Laurie Dhue received \$1 million.

O'Reilly denies the allegations.

Leftover GoFundMe money should help others in need

DEAR ABBY: I'm responding to the Oct. 25 letter from "Maria in California" regarding the leftover money in her late husband's GoFundMe account.

If more than enough is contributed to help someone in need pay their medical expenses, that money is not intended to be "income" for the recipient's family. You rightly suggested considering her husband's wishes, but the contributors' intent was to help a needy person pay MEDICAL expenses. Any leftover funds should be donated to a nonprofit organization with similar goals, perhaps a free medical clinic for low-income patients or an organization that provides free or reduced-cost housing for families who travel to medical centers for a loved one's treatment. Family members should not profit from generous donors who intended to help pay a needy individual's medical bills.

GLEN IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR GLEN: Thank you for your comment. Other readers disagreed with my answer and said that Maria and her family should "pay it forward." Read on:

DEAR ABBY: Regarding which family member is "entitled" to the leftover funds from Maria's terminally ill husband's GoFundMe account: I say NONE OF THEM. People donated money to help defray the costs of treating the husband's illness. Now

those have been paid, it is unseemly (a money grab) and unethical (fraud) to assume remaining funds can be used by either the widow or the daughter. The money wasn't given to them!

The solution is to donate the remaining funds to the disease research, hospice, medical facility, or any other cause near and dear to the DECEASED'S heart. That way, there is no conflict of interest, no impropriety, and it's the right thing to do.

MO IN SAN DIEGO

DEAR ABBY: "Maria in California" asked what to do with leftover money raised on GoFundMe for her husband who has passed away. I would have suggested she go back to the GoFundMe site and find some other families in need and donate the money to them.

MARION IN UTAH

DEAR ABBY: My fiance and I have been together for four years. I love him very much, but there are times when he lectures me, and I get tired of it. Then about an hour later—maybe sooner—he will come and say, "I'm sorry." I'm getting frustrated because he's always "sorry." There are times I just roll my eyes and wait. What can I do or say when he comes back to apologize when he always makes it my fault?

FRUSTRATED IN SOUTH CAROLINA

DEAR ABBY

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



DEAR FRUSTRATED: What is going on is a red flag, and you should recognize it as such. That your fiance talks down to you, and then says he's sorry but it was your fault, isn't an apology. It's a lame excuse for his bad (verbally abusive) behavior. Please carefully examine what is really going on in your relationship before it begins to affect your self-esteem, and possibly rethink this engagement.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$16 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

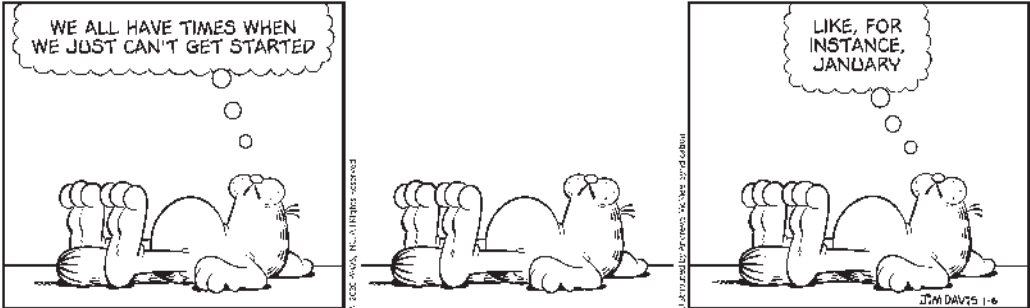
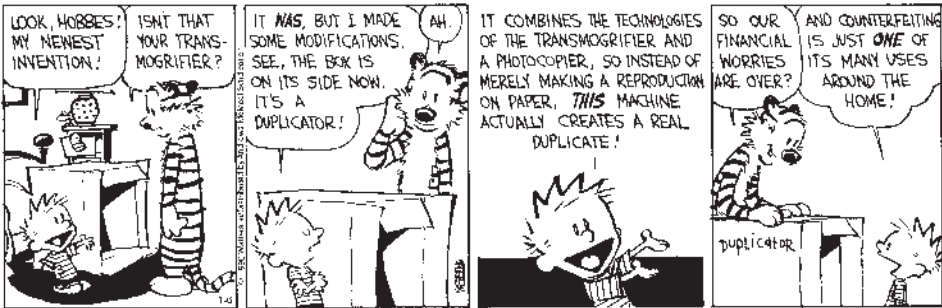
Pastimes

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By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 — vu

5 Goal

8 "Waterloo" group

12 Actress Rossellini

14 Golf bag item

15 Mix up

16 Ringle

17 Aunt, in Acapulco

18 Somnolent

20 Sound of Washington

23 Dance move

24 Poker variety

25 Satisfy an itch

28 Earl Grey, e.g.

29 A Great Lake

30 With it, once

32 Skin abrasions

34 Lima's land

35 Use a sponge

36 Vice President Burr

37 Hawaiian "thank you"

40 Vichy water

41 Algerian seaport

42 Pennsylvania city

47 Kite flier's need

48 Swimmer's woes

49 Zilch

50 Hosp. workers

51 Olympian queen

3 Honey holder

4 Lessened

5 Goya's duchess

6 Under the weather

7 Orchestra leaders

8 Take

9 Sad

10 Baby-feeding finale

11 With skill

13 Send forth

19 Low-fat Calif. clock

21 Western tribe

22 Avocado dip, for short

23 Rocky debris

25 Imagined

26 "Believe" singer

27 Protagonist

29 Greet

31 Bit of wit

33 Kigali's land

34 Beer gut

36 Tiny battery

37 Cut, as a lawn

38 Opera house solo

39 Round of applause

40 Messes up

43 Automobile

44 Fill in — blank

45 Not 'neath

46 Code-breaking gp.

Solution time: 26 mins.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kate McKinnon, 36; Julie Chen, 50; Gabrielle Reece, 50; Rowan Atkinson, 65.

Happy Birthday: Make plans that will bring you closer to the ones you love. Set a plan in motion to improve your living space or to accommodate plans that will encourage you to broaden your interests or pick up knowledge or skills that will be instrumental in reaching your goals. Turn this year into an opportunity by taking action and making things happen. Your numbers are 2, 13, 18, 22, 25, 34, 43.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Stick to what you do best. Concentrate on getting ahead, doing a good job and playing fair. How you present your objectives and beliefs, and what you are willing to contribute will make a difference in the way others receive you. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): A change you make personally will lead to a bigger and better opportunity. Check out your options, and voice your opinions. Express your feelings, and be passionate about what you are willing to give in return. Offer peace, not chaos. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Dress for the part. Show up ready to do your best, and you will make a good impression. Less criticism and more decisive action will encourage others to help you reach your objective. Personal improvements will lead to personal gains. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Progress will require change. Look for opportunities that will enable you to use your creative imagination to make your life and your

relationships with others better. If you feel passionate about something, follow through and be the one to make a difference. ****

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Accept the inevitable, and get on with your day. Put your energy into the projects and people who share your long-term goals. Don't worry about what outsiders do. Choose your path, and don't stop until you reach your destination. **

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You are overdue for a positive lifestyle change. Look at what's available, what would make you happy and who you want to involve in your plans. Network, socialize and discuss your intentions. Personal growth will enhance your life. *****

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Look for alternatives. Spread your wings, and see what's available. Put greater emphasis on a lifestyle change, updating your image, expanding your skills and associating with people who share your objectives. Romance is on the rise. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You will get a broader scope of what's possible if you engage in talks that offer firsthand experience. What you find out will change the way you look at partnerships and encourage you to associate more with people who share your interests. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't let aggression take over. Channel your energy into something constructive. Refuse to let someone talk you into something that will benefit him or her more than it will you. Personal improvement and romance will bring the highest return. ***

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Take good care of meaningful relationships. Go out of your way to make someone you love smile. The payback will be worth whatever it takes to spread joy. A residential move or renovation will improve your lifestyle and add to your comfort. *****

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Put your head down, stay focused and don't stop until you are satisfied with the results you are getting. Question your feelings, your relationships and what you can do to make your life more gratifying. Personal growth is encouraged. **

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Do what needs doing without making a fuss or a big deal out of your contribution. You'll have the biggest and the best impact on others if you stay focused and do your best to make a genuine difference. *****

Birthday Baby: You are sensitive, caring and entertaining. You are productive and persistent.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

4	6		1			2					
			5	7	4						
	9	2		6	1						3
2	7						8				
		1		3		7					
	3							9	4		
9		5		1		2	4				
		4	6		5						
8			2			5					6

Difficulty Level ★

1/06

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

4	8	2	3	1	6	5	7	9
9	5	1	2	7	4	6	8	3
3	7	6	9	8	5	4	1	2
8	1	4	5	6	3	9	2	7
5	9	3	7	4	2	8	6	1
2	6	7	1	9	8	3	4	5
6	2	5	4	3	7	1	9	8
1	3	8	6	2	9	7	5	4
7	4	9	8	5	1	2	3	6

Difficulty Level ★★

WONDERWORD

By DAVID CUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

TURNING 70!

Solution: 9 letters

S	M	N	C	M	O	M	E	N	T	R	O	S	E	R
K	W	B	I	K	E	Y	O	N	E	F	D	A	E	R
I	I	I	S	E	R	N	E	V	A	D	L	L	R	N
I	S	E	U	O	V	D	T	M	I	S	R	S	F	O
N	D	I	M	T	I	I	I	O	W	E	N	A	S	S
G	O	E	N	F	N	L	R	I	R	A	S	G	G	S
B	M	L	N	S	Y	E	M	D	E	T	F	I	G	E
A	I	O	A	O	P	A	R	M	J	H	V	T	N	O
L	C	R	J	S	T	I	E	A	A	I	O	G	S	L
L	R	N	T	U	O	W	R	R	P	Z	K	L	D	F
R	E	N	R	H	I	C	E	E	I	D	Z	E	N	E
O	C	E	A	S	D	C	I	L	F	T	N	V	E	T
O	I	P	H	D	N	A	B	A	L	I	E	A	I	A
M	P	O	P	A	R	T	Y	X	L	E	L	R	R	R
Y	E	H	D	I	N	E	R	H	C	A	E	T	F	G

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1/6

Aging, Ballroom, Band, Bike, Birthday, Confident, Dance, Diner, Drive-In, Enjoy, Family, Free, Friends, Garden, Gift, Grandparent, Grateful, Happy, Hike, Hope, Inspire, Jazz, Jeans, Lesson, Life, Love, Mature, Memory, Mentor, Moment, Movies, Music, Party, Read, Recipe, Relax, Resort, Retire, Salon, Salsa, Skiing, Social, Swim, Teach, Travel, Well, Wisdom, Wish

Last Friday's Answer: Hospitals
To purchase WONDERWORD books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

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(2) Custodial-I (Saipan)
(1) ARFF Trainee (Saipan)

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Detailed information on qualifications and position descriptions for the above positions shall be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., except on holidays, at the CPA Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin. Office at the Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.tenorio@cpa.gov.mp or hrspecialist@cpa.gov.mp or by phone at (670)237-6500.

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Titans stun Patriots; Texans edge Bills in OT



FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP)—When the eerie Foxborough fog lifted, it became clear that New England's reign atop the NFL was ending.

Derrick Henry ensured that with the kind of dominating playoff performance usually reserved for Tom Brady and the Patriots.

Henry rushed for 182 yards and a touchdown while Tennessee's defense stymied Brady and perhaps ended his championship-filled New England career with a 20-13 wild-card victory Saturday night.

Brady vows to be back on an NFL field next season, but his contract with the Patriots is done.

"I love the Patriots," the 42-year Brady said, adding about leaving the game after 20 seasons: "I would say it's pretty unlikely, hopefully unlikely. I love playing football. I don't know what it looks like moving forward."

Doing the most moving forward Saturday night was Henry, who had a total of 184 yards rushing in two playoff games two years ago. He nearly got that against the league's top-ranked defense in boosting the Titans (10-7) into the divisional round at No. 1 seed Baltimore.

"It's a great win against a great team in a hostile environment," Henry said on his 26th birthday. "Credit to my team. I'm just happy we were able to advance."

"We were just locked in. That was our mindset, just coming in here doing what we needed to do in all three phases, stay locked in no matter what happens in the game, and I feel like we did that."

For sure.

As that dense fog that shrouded Gillette Stadium for the first half dissipated, the Patriots, who made the last three Super Bowls and won two, stalled repeatedly with the ball. They no longer were the bullies on the block — Henry was.

As for this defeat, the Patriots' fourth as a wild card, Brady noted: "They kind of stopped us in the first half and the second half and we couldn't get the job done."

There had been no scoring in the second half when All-Pro Brett Kern's 58-yard punt that took up 10 of the final 25 seconds rolled down at the New England 1. Brady then was picked by former Patriot Logan Ryan for a 9-yard touchdown to finish off the Patriots (12-5), who at one point were 8-0.

The game's first three pos-



Tennessee Titans running back Derrick Henry, left, runs away from New England Patriots defensive tackle Lawrence Guy, center, in the first half of an NFL wild-card playoff football game, Saturday, Jan. 4, 2020, in Foxborough, Mass.

the most by an opposing QB since 2001, including playoffs.

Texans 22, Bills 19 OT

In Houston, Deshaun Watson spun out of a would-be sack and coolly completed a pass that set up the winning field goal in overtime as the Texans rallied from a double-digit second-half deficit for a victory over Buffalo in the first round of the playoffs.

Both teams punted on their first possessions of overtime—the first extra period in an AFC wild-card game since January 2012. On Houston's next drive, Watson evaded a sack by wriggling away from one defender and bouncing off another before rolling out to find Taiwan Jones for a 34-yard reception to set up first-and-goal.

Watson flexed both arms as the crowd at NRG Stadium went wild—knowing their team was in position to pull off another comeback win to Houston's playoff history.

Ka'imi Fairbairn then kicked a 28-yard field goal to lift Houston to the victory.

The Texans (11-6) advance to the divisional round of the playoffs next weekend where they'll face the Chiefs.

The Texans got a boost from the return of J.J. Watt, who had a sack that helped spark his team. Houston scored 19 straight points to take the lead before Stephen Hauschka's 47-yard field goal tied it with 5 seconds left to force overtime.

It was Watt's first game after sitting out since October with a torn pectoral muscle.

The win gives the Texans their first playoff victory since the 2016 season and extends Buffalo's postseason losing streak to six games, with their most recent playoff win coming in 1995. It's the first wild-card overtime game since the Broncos beat the Steelers 29-23 in the 2011 season.

This time Josh Allen and the Bills (10-7) used a dominant first half to build a 13-point lead and were up 16-0 in the third quarter.

Watson had 247 yards passing and ran for 55 yards and DeAndre Hopkins had 90 yards receiving.

Allen threw for 264 yards, ran for 92 and caught a touchdown pass on a trick play in the first quarter, but often looked rattled late in his playoff debut.

Brady exits NFL playoffs with loss, retirement unlikely

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP)—Tom Brady walked off the field at the end of his 20th NFL season and said he plans to be back for another, when he will be 43 years old.

If not in New England, somewhere else.

The Patriots quarterback said after a season-ending 20-13 loss to the Tennessee Titans on Saturday night that he has no plans to retire, putting owner Robert Kraft and coach Bill Belichick on the clock to either re-sign him or watch the franchise's greatest player suit up somewhere else.

"I would say it's pretty unlikely, hopefully unlikely" that he would retire, Brady told reporters. "I love playing football, I love playing for this team. I've loved playing for this team for two decades and winning a lot of games. I

don't know what it looks like moving forward."

Brady completed 20 of 37 passes for 209 yards with no touchdowns, throwing a game-clinching interception that was returned for a touchdown. That left him with a lower quarterback rating than Ryan Tannehill, who threw for a total of 72 yards in his first career playoff appearance.

It was the earliest postseason exit for Brady and the Patriots in a decade.

"I think we're all running out of time and chances, every year that goes by," said Brady, who was without a touchdown pass for the second consecutive postseason game—and just the fourth time since 2001. "I don't think I'm the only one in that category."

Brady threw for 4,057 yards and 24 touchdowns this season, with eight interceptions. But he completed fewer than 56% of his passes six

A six-time Super Bowl champion, four-time Most Valuable Player of the NFL title game and three-time winner of the league MVP, Brady is not under contract for next season. Although he has said he wants to play until he is 45, he is coming off perhaps the worst (non-injury) season of his career.

"Who knows what the future holds? We'll leave it at that," Brady said. "I love the Patriots. It's the greatest organization. Playing for Mr. Kraft all these years, and for coach Belichick, there's nobody who's had a better career than me, just being with them. So I'm very blessed."

Brady threw for 4,057 yards and 24 touchdowns this season, with eight interceptions. But he completed fewer than 56% of his passes six

times in the final eight games of the year, including a season-ending loss to a four-win Miami team that cost the Patriots a first-round bye and then the wild-card loss to the Titans.

Still, the love from New England fans has never waned.

A fan in the front row hung a banner reading, "Please Stay Tommy." The rest of the crowd for what could be the last home game of his Patriots career showed its love by chanting his name a half-dozen times throughout the night.

But Brady's last pass was intercepted and returned for a touchdown by Logan Ryan, a teammate during two championship seasons, sending the Titans to a divisional round matchup with the Baltimore Ravens.

steadily drove to first-and-goal at the 1.

All they got was Folk's 21-yard field goal as three runs failed. It was the 13th time the Patriots had first-and-goal at the 1 in a playoff game in the Brady era and the first time they failed to get a TD on the drive.

Tannehill led the NFL with a career-best 117.5 passer rating and by averaging 9.6 yards per pass attempt. But he didn't do a whole lot Saturday night in his first postseason game: 8 of 15 for 72 yards. His awful

decision to put the ball up for grabs on the first play of the fourth quarter resulted in Duron Harmon's interception.

But New England's spotty attack flopped and never revived. That has not been unusual during the second half of the schedule.

Tannehill's passing yards were the fewest for a starter since the Ravens' Joe Flacco had 34 in a wild-card win against the Patriots 10 years ago.

Tannehill now has five victories over Brady, second only to Peyton Manning's six for

sessions wound up as three long scoring drives. A 29-yard screen pass to James White set up Nick Folk's 36-yard field goal, but Tennessee answered with a 75-yard march built around Henry. He had no role on the touchdown, Tannehill's pass to a Harvard man, tight end Anthony Firkser that made it 7-3.

Firkser is the first player from Harvard to score a playoff TD.

New England counterpunched with its own 75-yard drive, taking temporary con-

trol of the game by victimizing Tennessee's defense on the outside. The Titans looked slow trying to protect the flanks as Sony Michel broke off a 25-yard run and White had a 14-yarder.

Julian Edelman finished it with the first rushing touchdown of his 11 pro seasons, a 5-yard dash to the unprotected left side of the Tennessee D.

New England appeared primed for another touchdown after Mohamed Sanu's 14-yard punt return set up the Patriots at the Titans 47, and they

Grizzlies romp past George-less Clippers



LOS ANGELES (AP)—Jae Crowder scored 27 points and the Memphis Grizzlies took advantage of Los Angeles star Paul George's absence to rout the Clippers 140-114 on Saturday.

Jaren Jackson Jr. added 24 points, and Ja Morant and Dillon Brooks had 22 points each to help Memphis improve to 7-10 on the road with its highest scoring game of the season.

Montrezl Harrell led the Clippers with 28 points, and Kawhi Leonard and Lou Williams added 24 points each. The team appeared out of sorts from the start without George. He sat out with left hamstring tightness and Los Angeles clearly missed his defense.

The usually stoic Leonard complained to the referees, who hit him with a technical after the halftime buzzer. Coach Doc Rivers stayed on court discussing it and was unhappy about other calls in the game.

The Grizzlies raced to an 18-point lead to open the game, highlighted by a 16-2 run that included four 3-pointers. By the time Williams made the Clippers' first 3-pointer late in the second, cutting their deficit to seven, the Grizzlies had already connected on 10 3s. Los Angeles never got closer.

Bucks 127, Spurs 118

In Milwaukee, Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 19 of his 32 points in the third quarter to help NBA-leading Milwaukee beat San Antonio.

The Bucks improved to 32-5 with their fifth straight victory since a Christmas Day loss in Philadelphia. Eric Bledsoe added 21 points.

Khris Middleton scored 20 points for the Bucks and backup center Robin Lopez had 14 points in 19 minutes.

DeMar DeRozan led the Spurs with 26 points and LaMarcus Aldridge added 16 -- all the first half.

Raptors 121, Nets 102

In New York, Fred VanVleet had 29 points and 11 assists, Kyle Lowry scored 26 points and Toronto bounced back from its worst offensive performance of the season to beat slumping Brooklyn.

Serge Ibaka finished with 21 points and 12 rebounds for the Raptors. They were held to season lows for points and shooting in their 84-76 loss in Miami, when they hit just 31.5% overall and went 6 for 42 from 3-point range (14.3%). Toronto made 13 3s and beat Brooklyn for the 17th time in 18 meetings.

Spencer Dinwiddie scored 23 points for the Nets. They have lost five straight games.



Celtics 111, Bulls 104

In Chicago, Jayson Tatum scored 28 points, Gordon Hayward added 24 and Boston beat the Bulls.

The Celtics hung on for their eighth win in nine games after a 16-point lead dwindled to three in the fourth quarter. Tatum hit a 3-pointer with just over a minute left to bump the lead to seven, and the Atlantic Division leaders came out on top after rallying from 18 down to beat Atlanta on Friday night.

Zach LaVine scored 35 points for Chicago.

Hornets 123, Mavericks 120, OT

In Dallas, Terry Rozier scored 29 points, including the go-ahead 3-pointer in overtime after his tying basket in regulation, and Charlotte outlasted the Mavericks.

Luka Doncic set a Dallas season record with his NBA-leading 10th triple-double, finishing with 39 points, 12 rebounds and 10 assists.

Devonte Graham had 27 points and 13 assists to help the Hornets win their second straight after a season-worst six-game losing streak.

Wizards 129, Nuggets 114

In Washington, Ish Smith scored a career-high 32 points and Troy Brown added 25 and a career-high 14 rebounds in Washington's victory over Denver.

After Denver took a 101-99 lead with 9:33 left on Mason Plumlee's dunk, the Wizards scored the next 11 with the run eventually reaching 19-2 for a 118-103 lead with 4:48

remaining. Smith scored 11 points in that stretch, capping the surge with a 3-pointer.

Jamal Murray scored all 39 of his points after the first quarter for Denver. The Nuggets have lost two of three on their five-game trip.

Jazz 109, Magic 96

In Orlando, Donovan Mitchell scored 32 points and Georges Niang added 15 off the bench to help Utah beat Orlando for its fifth straight victory.

Bojan Bogdanovic had 14 points, Emmanuel Mudiay scored 12 points and Joe Ingles had 11.

Terrence Ross led Orlando with 24 points. Nikola Vucevic had 22 points and 11 rebounds.

Thunder 121, Cavaliers 106

In Cleveland, Dennis Schroder scored 22 points, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander had 20 and Oklahoma City beat the

Cavaliers to run its winning streak to five.

Danilo Gallinari added 19 points, hitting five 3-pointers, and Steven Adams grabbed 16 rebounds.

Collin Sexton scored 30 points for Cleveland.

Pistons 111, Warriors 104

In San Francisco, Andre Drummond had 14 points and 18 rebounds before fouling out late, Derrick Rose scored 22

Los Angeles Clippers' Landry Shamet, right, works for a loose ball next to Memphis Grizzlies' Dillon Brooks during the first half of an NBA game Saturday, Jan. 4, 2020, in Los Angeles.

points off the bench and Detroit beat Golden State to snap a three-game losing streak.

Reserve guard Alec Burks contributed 27 points, seven rebounds and five assists in Golden State's fourth straight defeat following a four-game winning streak. Draymond Green was ejected with 4:57 left in the third.

Hawks 116, Pacers 111

In Atlanta, Trae Young scored 30 of his 41 points in the first half, Kevin Huerter added a season-high 26 points and Atlanta beat Indiana after blowing a 22-point lead.

Domantas Sabonis had 25 points and 11 rebounds for Indiana. Justin Holiday added 18 points.

Pelicans 117, Kings 115

In Sacramento, JJ Redick's driving layup with 1.1 seconds remaining lifted New Orleans over the Kings.

Lonzo Ball had 24 points with 10 assists and Redick scored 18 as the Pelicans won for the fifth time in six games.

Nemanja Bjelica converted a four-point play for Sacramento with 4.2 seconds left to tie it at 115. Harrison Barnes scored 30 points to lead the Kings, and Buddy Hield added 24.

Schauffele holds onto a 1-shot lead at Kapalua

KAPALUA, Hawaii (AP)—Xander Schauffele made his first bogey in 60 holes at Kapalua dating to his victory last year. He didn't feel as though he did anything special Saturday in the Sentry Tournament of Champions.

As it turned out, he didn't have to.

Schauffele overcame a pair of bogeys that cost him the lead with consecutive birdies on the back nine and, more importantly, no mistakes over the final hour. It was good enough for a 2-under 71 that allowed him to keep a one-shot lead over Justin Thomas going into the final round.

"I was 2 under, then back to even, then finished at 2 under. Overall, nothing to be too upset about," Schauffele said as he tries to become the first player in 10 years to win back-to-back against this winners-only field on Maui.

Thomas, going for his third victory in his last seven starts on the PGA Tour, felt differently. Never mind that he endured another day of strong gusts and rain that showed up and left without warning. Or that he made five birdies on the front nine and shot 69.

Thomas missed a pair of 6-foot par putts because he guessed wrong while trying to guess how much the wind would affect slope and grain. He normally thrives on the back nine of the Plantation Course, and on this day shot 38.

He was in the final group. He just knows what could have been. "I felt like I really let a good one get away from me," Thomas said.

Even so, it set up a compelling finish for the first tournament of the year. Schauffele is No. 9 in the world with a passion for winning that doesn't always come through in his sly smile and easy gait. Thomas is No. 4 in the world who has never been too far from the lead the last six months.

"We just both hate losing, pretty plain and simple," Schauffele said. "He talks openly about how he hates to lose. I don't know anyone else more competitive than I am. He's probably argue the same way. We both want it, and fortunately we're pretty good friends and we're familiar with each other and we know each other's games. We both have enough firepower to make some moves here and there."

But it's not that simple. "It's going to be what the course is willing to give when it's blowing 25 mph," Schauffele said.

And it's not just them. Schauffele was at 11-under 208, the highest 54-hole score to lead at Kapalua since Vijay Singh was at 11 under in 2007. Nine players were within four shots of the lead.

Schauffele came from five shots behind last year when he closed with a 62 to beat Gary Woodland by one. Woodland

shot a 69 on Saturday and was three shots behind. The group at 7-under 212 included Jon Rahm, Kevin Kisner and Patrick Reed, along with a quartet of first-timers at Kapalua—Joaquin Niemann, Matt Wolff, Collin Morikawa and J.T. Poston. Thomas wasn't alone in his sloppy finish. Patrick Cantlay ran off three straight birdies to get into the mix, only to hit a tee shot out-of-bounds on the 14th and hit another tee shot into the waist-high weeds on the 18th, leading to bogey. He shot 39 on the back for a 73 and fell five shots behind. Niemann, who opened with a 66 on Thursday, failed to birdie the two par 5s and made bogeys on the two par 4s between them. He shot 39 on the back and had to settle for a 74, leaving him four shots behind. Reed had a 74, eight shots worse than his round Friday, and he was in the group four shots behind.

Sentry
TOURNAMENT OF
CHAMPIONS

Wildfires could cause problems for Aussie Open



BRISBANE

(AP)—Novak Djokovic has voiced concerns about the impact of the devastating wildfires in Australia on tennis' season-opening major, saying organizers may have to consider delaying the tournament if conditions around Melbourne deteriorate.

Djokovic has won a record seven Australian Open men's championships at Melbourne Park among his 16 Grand Slam singles titles and will be among the favorites again when the tournament is scheduled to start on Monday, Jan. 20.

But with wildfires raging across large parts of the country, already leaving 23 people dead and 1,500 homes destroyed, air quality has become an issue in cities including Sydney, Melbourne and the capital, Canberra.

Djokovic opened his season with a 7-6 (5), 7-6 (6) win for Serbia over South Africa's Kevin Anderson at the ATP Cup in Brisbane on Saturday night and said his own management team had been liaising with Tennis Australia about the impact of the wildfires, particularly in Sydney—where the ATP Cup group stage is underway and where the play-offs and final will be held next week—and in Melbourne.

Djokovic said it was reasonable to consider delaying the start of the tournament because of the extreme conditions “but I think that’s probably the very, very last option for anything.”

“I think they’re going to try to do anything to not delay anything in terms of days and when it starts,” he told a news conference. “But if it comes down to ... those conditions affecting the health of players, I think we should definitely consider it.”

AP
Novak Djokovic of Serbia reacts after being heckled by a spectator during his match against Kevin Anderson of South Africa at the ATP Cup tennis tournament in Brisbane, Australia, Saturday, Jan. 4, 2020.



Djokovic said tennis administrators were “obviously tracking the situation every single day as it’s evolving.”

“I think they will, if it continues same way and if the quality of air is affected in Melbourne or Sydney, I think Tennis Australia probably will be forced to create some rules about it,” he said. “It’s tough for them because scheduling ... has to be respected in terms of play and the Australian Open starts at a certain time, so there’s a lot of different things involved. But health concern is a health concern for me and for anybody.”

Djokovic said the players’ council for the men’s tour “would discuss it for sure” if conditions get worse, adding

that players had in the past dealt with poor air quality at some tournaments in China and elsewhere, “but this is something different.”

“So I really never had this kind of experience before,” he said. “I hope that it’s going to dissipate, that this is something that is very temporary.”

The ATP Cup is also a concern in Sydney.

Anderson, a former No. 5-ranked player who lost the Wimbledon final to Djokovic in 2018 and is coming off a prolonged injury layoff, said players had previously discussed setting safety guidelines regarding air quality but no limits had been decided.

“Obviously first and foremost

it’s been so sad to see everything that’s been going on ... just being here you realize just the extent of what’s going on,” he said. “Obviously, sort of distant second is us and ... our air quality and being able to perform.”

“But obviously it is hazardous. I think that’s one of the concerns in some of the Asian weeks that we play in and that’s something that we have spoken about on the council. At what point does it become unhealthy ... I mean hopefully it won’t be an issue, but if it is I think definitely need to have that conversation about if it’s dangerous to be out there.”

Tennis players, other athletes and celebrities are among thousands of people already pledg-

ing money to help with the bushfire recovery, with Australian Nick Kyrgios donating 200 Australian dollars for every ace he hits this month.

The path of destruction widened in at least three states Saturday amid strong winds and high temperatures in what is already being described as the worst bushfire season in Australian history.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced 3,000 army reservists had been called up to battle the escalating fires in support of the thousands of firefighters already working on the ground.

The fire danger increased as temperatures rose Saturday to record levels across Australia,

surpassing 43 degrees Celsius (109 Fahrenheit) in Canberra and reaching a record-high 48.9 C (120 F) in Penrith, in Sydney’s western suburbs. Group games in the ATP Cup were held nearby, at the site of Sydney’s 2000 Olympic venue, and players were struggling in the conditions.

The wildfires have already burned about 5 million hectares (12.35 million acres) of land since September.

The group stage of the 24-team ATP Cup is being staged in Sydney, Brisbane and Perth. Brisbane, in Queensland state, for now is relatively clear of smoke after destructive wildfires late in 2019 but there are fires causing destruction to the north, south and west of Sydney.



WASHINGTON

The third base free-agent market is all but dried up, leaving 34-year-old slugger Josh Donaldson as the last big name on the board.

After a season in which he hit 37 home runs and drove in 94 runs for the Braves, Donaldson was widely considered the second-best option at third base this winter behind Anthony Rendon.

When it was reported that Donaldson could end up with a four-year deal, it was difficult to determine what team would be willing to go that far for a player past his prime.

Not only were the Nationals one of the team’s reportedly willing to give Donaldson four years, they could also throw him some serious money on top of it.

“There are three teams that

Nationals wooing Donaldson for \$100M

are making very serious offers to Josh Donaldson,” MLB columnist Mark Feinsand said. “The Twins, the Nationals and the Braves all have four-year offers out to him in that \$100 million range.”

Feinsand also noted the Dodgers and Rangers as two teams who could get in the mix, but the primary suitors are Minnesota, Washington and Atlanta.

Donaldson has been able to create a robust market for himself thanks to the massive drop off in available third baseman after him. If the Nationals don’t land Donaldson and are uninterested in players like Todd Frazier and Asdrubal Cabrera, they could turn to the trade market to fill their need at third.

The Nats have had reportedly explored trades for Kris

Bryant and Nolan Arenado, but have refused to include Victor Robles in any trade.

If you’re looking for any of the aforementioned scenarios to resolve soon, you might be disappointed. Feinsand mentioned how Donaldson has the luxury to wait teams out to try and get as much money as possible since there aren’t many alternatives to choose from.

For Bryant, he’s still in the middle of a grievance with the league over his service time, so a trade for him is unlikely until that’s resolved. And then there’s Arenado, who the Rockies may not even want to trade in the first place.

The wait continues.

Meanwhile, the Los Angeles Angels and catcher Jason Castro have agreed to a \$6.85

million, one-year contract, according to a person with knowledge of the deal.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the deal was pending a successful physical and had not been announced.

The 32-year-old Castro was an All-Star with Houston in 2013 and has a strong defensive reputation. He batted .232 with 13 home runs and a .767 OPS in 79 games for the Minnesota Twins last season.

Los Angeles used five players at catcher last year, with Jonathan Lucroy and Kevan Smith getting the most starts. Angels backstops combined to bat .221 with 15 home runs and were valued at -0.6 wins above replacement (per

FanGraphs). Castro has been worth at least 1.6 WAR in six of the past seven seasons.

Castro is set to join a lineup that also added All-Star third baseman Anthony Rendon on a \$245 million, seven-year deal last month.

In Chicago, Luis Robert is locked in with the White Sox for the next six years at least, and possibly for the opening day lineup, too.

The White Sox and their prized young outfielder agreed Thursday to a \$50 million, six-year contract, clearing the way for Robert start the season in the majors.

The deal, which includes club options for 2026 and 2027, removes the incentive for the White Sox to keep the 22-year-old Cuban off their

opening day roster to limit his service time and delay his eventual free agency.

“People are understandably focused on what, potentially, this means for our opening day roster,” Hahn said. “I understand the focus on the 2020 season. But it’s really just much more about the long term and having Luis Robert patrolling center field for hopefully at least the next eight years in a White Sox uniform.”

Robert said through an interpreter he is “100% convinced” he will start the season in the majors and is relieved he won’t have to worry about beginning the year in the minors.

“I’m going to do my best to help this team win multiple championships,” he said. “And I know that we’re going to be able to do that because we have some very good, talented players.”

Ahead of UFC return, McGregor taunts Khabib

LAST VEGAS—It may be more than a year since Conor McGregor stepped into the octagon with Khabib Nurmagomedov at UFC 229, but their rivalry is far from over.

McGregor, who is set to make his UFC return later this month, is more than willing to set up a rematch with Nurmagomedov.

Yet Nurmagomedov, McGregor said Friday in an interview with TheMacLife.com, is scared.

"[Nurmagomedov] is trembling," McGregor said, via TheMacLife. "That man is trembling. He doesn't want it. He doesn't want it. You get it. He's trying not to lose it again ... I just smell s--t. That's all

it is. He's afraid, and that's it. Everyone wants it. The boss wants it. [UFC President] Dana [White] wants it. We all want it. He can run, but he cannot hide. I look forward to it."

Nurmagomedov, who boasts a perfect 28-0 MMA record, beat McGregor in the fourth round at UFC 229 in October 2018 at T-Mobile Arena. That iconic fight was amplified, too, when it quickly sprawled outside of the octagon into a wild post-fight bout.

While Nurmagomedov got the win, McGregor still believes he was winning most of the fight. However one of the biggest reasons for his downfall, he said, falls solely



on him.

"That [loss] was after a horrendous camp where I was so disrespectful to the people that believe in me," McGregor said, via TheMacLife. "I was disrespectful to my team with my lack of commitment, and I still went out and done that."

McGregor is hopping back into the cage on Jan. 18, where he'll square off against Donald Cerrone in a welterweight fight at UFC 246 — a division in which he's competed just twice before in his career.

He hasn't fought since his

bout with Nurmagomedov, and hasn't won since he beat Eddie Alvarez at UFC 205 in 2016, either.

A win against Cerrone could open doors for McGregor, who sounds committed to making a comeback and reminding people "about my skill base." He's finally committed now, he said, a place he hasn't been in for quite some time.

And he's more than ready to kick off his year on a high note.

"I am back. I am back to who I am," McGregor said,

via TheMacLife. "I look forward to going in and showcasing it on January 18. And whoever is after that, again it does not matter. I'll be ready. This is the beginning of my 2020 season."

Meanwhile, Cerrone is nobody's sacrificial lamb no matter how much he's getting paid.

Just weeks ahead of his upcoming fight against McGregor at UFC 246, Cerrone has started to hear rumors that he's being offered a substantial payday to lay down for the

In this Oct. 6, 2018 file photo, Khabib Nurmagomedov, left, hits Conor McGregor during a lightweight title mixed martial arts bout at UFC 229 in Las Vegas.

former two-division champion in his first action since October 2018.

As much as Cerrone might enjoy a few extra zeroes being tacked onto his paycheck, the 36-year-old veteran slammed those rumors when speaking to MMA Fighting this week.

"Hell no, I'm not bowing down!" Cerrone said. "There's a bunch of s--t going around, people keep telling me 'I heard you're getting paid to take a dive.' There wouldn't be enough money in the world for someone to pay me to take a dive."

"I could never look myself in the mirror if somebody paid me to take a dive. S--t, never happen."

The narrative going into the UFC 246 main event is that McGregor is being set up for a busy 2020 that starts by taking out Cowboy before he then moves onto potential fights against Jorge Masvidal and Nurmagomedov.

SLLB meeting Jan. 15

The Saipan Little League Baseball Inc. will be holding a managers and coaches' meeting on Jan. 15 at 5:30pm at the Department of Public Works' Roads and Grounds Division in Lower Base.

The meeting will take place



to discuss the opening of the 2020 Little League season. Managers and coaches who can not make it to the meeting are requested to send their representatives.

For more information, contact Mike Borja at 483-2526. (PR)

BLUE

From Page 28

despite falling behind by twin digits early in the game. Pacific Marine built a 27-14 advantage at the end of the first period behind the 12 points of John Flores. However, Pacific Marine failed to keep the upper hand in the next quarter, as Tony Diaz and Errol Peredo teamed up in bringing Blue Haus back into the game and turning the tables on their opponent.

Diaz, who was held to one field goal in the opening canto, scored 12 points in the second, while Peredo had another 8-point performance to finish the half with 16 and hand Blue Haus the precarious lead, 44-43.

Blue Haus went on to pull away in the second half with Peredo and Diaz still on target and their other teammates also hitting their shots. Peredo ended up firing 40 points, while Diaz chipped in 33. Junar Guiab and Richard Peredo contributed 14 points apiece, while Jeff Garcia also had double figures with his 12.

Flores paced Pacific Marine with his 28 points, but he was held to 2 in the second quarter and had only 4 markers in the final period.

In the other Masters Division match last Thursday, Gilas Batang banked on a good start and survived PPG Paint's third-quarter rally to get its first win of the season.

Dick Tibayan and John Jugos combined for 14 points in the first period to lift Gilas

Batang to a 23-12 lead and the team kept the double-digit spread at the break, 40-22, with the latter adding 8 more markers in the second period.

PPG Paint then threatened Gilas Batang in the third canto, as Sonny Ebuken knocked in four triples and Tito Alano scored 9 markers to tie the game, 52-all.

However, PPG Paint failed to sustain its momentum in the fourth frame with Ebuken held to 5 points and Alano going scoreless. Jugos, on the other hand, logged 11 points in the fourth quarter to make up for his one field goal output in the penultimate canto and steady the ship. Bart Dacumos and Poole combined for 11 points to provide enough support to Gilas Batang's main gunner.

Saturday's Game

Blue Haus 122—E. Peredo 40, Diaz 33, Guiab 14, R. Peredo 14, Garcia 12, Buenabaja 2.

Pacific Marine 96—Flores 28, Sevilla 20, Calunzag 18, Isip 13, Manangan 8, Landicho 6.

Scoring by quarters: 14-27, 44-43, 80-63, 122-27.

Thursday's Game

Gilas Batang 78—Jugos 29, D. Tibayan 18, Poole 14, Dacumos 6, J. Tibayan 5, Basa 2.

PPG Paints 69—Ebuken 24, Galulu 10, Alano 9, Elchico 8, Salazar 4, Sanciango 4, Moreno 4, Samson 3.

Scoring by quarters: 23-13, 40-22, 52-52, 68-69

EAFF

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NMIFA will be selecting 23 players to represent the CNMI to the preliminary competition.

MPU

From Page 28

dades, and Julie Chavez chipped in one goal apiece for TanHoldings. Rooney Gil had three goals to lead Kanoa's losing cause, while Paul Lizama delivered two, and the squad was awarded an own goal in the second half. Kanoa faced Shirley's in the battle for third place yesterday.

BOYS U15 DIVISION TanHoldings 6, Kanoa-2 4

TanHoldings also barged into the finals of the boys U15 division contest after ousting Kanoa-2.

Kohtar Goto starred in the semis win, as he nailed four goals, scoring in the 17th, 26th, 30th, and 33rd minute. R.J. Narvaez posted the two other goals for TanHoldings, as he drew first blood for the team in the fifth minute and earned his second in the 27th.

Sean Gil paced Kanoa-2 with his hat trick, while John Mark Anastacio tallied the other goal for the squad.

MP United 5, Kanoa-1 4

MP United 5 marched into the

In 2018, the Blue Ayuyus played in the EAFF E-1 Football Championships 2019 Round 1 at the Mongolian Football Federation Stadium in Ulan Bator and challenged the host country, Guam, and

Macau. The CNMI lost to Guam (4-0) and Mongolia (9-0) before closing out with a draw (1-1) against Macau, with Sunjoon Tenorio drilling the equalizer for the Blue Ayuyus.

Mongolia went on to advance to the second round, but missed the finale, which South Korea won last month after eking out a 1-0 victory over Japan at the Busan Asiad Main Stadium in Busan.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

A Shirley's Football Club player attempts to swing the ball, while an MP United FC defender steps into the play during their semis game in the co-ed U12 division of the 2019-2020 Holiday Futsal Jam last Saturday at the TSL Sports Complex.

title game in the division after outlasting Kanoa-1 in the penalty shootout.

Jeremiah Diaz, Richard Castro, Dane Hodges, Dylan Mister, and Kristoffer Pascual converted their penalty shot to help MP United

escape past Kanoa in the game that ended in 1-1 standoff at regulation. Brian Lubao made the equalizer for Kanoa in the 16th minute, three minutes after Mister handed MP United the shaky lead.

Lubao also scored for Kanoa in the penalty shootout, along with Daniel Mar Pablo, Merrick Toves, and Jaydee Jose.

GIRLS U16 DIVISION Southern 6, Shirley's 1

Southern United eased its way to the finals after dominating Shirley's FC in the first play-off match in the division.

Julie Hall and Nathanette Blas contributed two goals each for Southern United, which got an own goal and one from Kaithlyn Chavez. Shirley's lone goal was courtesy of Katrina Costales.

Kanoa 7, TanHoldings 3

Kanoa also cruised to the finals after outclassing TanHoldings in the second semis tiff.

Three straight goals from Paulynn Joyce sealed the deal for Kanoa, which raced to a 4-0 halftime lead. Khristelle Itaas delivered the other goal for Kanoa in the first half, while Joyce added two more in the second and Sharmaine Francisco closed out for the winning squad.

Mary Joy Aniana, Rizza Relucio, and Audrey Castro scored the three goals for TanHoldings.



Titans stun Patriots; Texans edge Bills in OT

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Grizzlies romp past George-less Clippers

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28 MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2020

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

MPU vs TanHoldings in finale

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

TanHoldings Football Club and MP United FC reached the championship game in both the co-ed U12 and boys U15 divisions of the 2019-2020 Holiday Futsal Jam after eliminating their respective playoff foes last Saturday at the TSL Sports Complex.



MP United took the first finals berth in the co-ed U12 age group after nosing out Shirley's FC, 4-3, while TanHoldings advanced following an 8-6 triumph over Kanoa in the other semis duel. TanHoldings and MP United disputed the division title last night and results of the finale were unavailable at press time.

Ian Song powered MP United to a finals stint in the short tournament after drilling three goals in their semis showdown against Shirley's. He made back-to-back goals in the first



MP United Football Club's Takeru Jim takes a shot in front of a Shirley's Football Club defender during their semis game in the co-ed U12 division of the 2019-2020 Holiday Futsal Jam last Saturday at the TSL Sports Complex.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

half, scoring in the seventh and 12th minute, while Miles Linden lit up the board in the 19th to hand MP United a 3-1 halftime lead. Benetton Haro posted the lone goal (fifth minute) for Shirley's in the first half.

An own goal right in the opening minute of the second half moved Shirley's within one, but Song came to MP United's rescue with his insurance and hat trick in the 34th minute.

In the other semis game, Mark

Costales also registered three goals, while Kaithlyn Chavez contributed two to help TanHoldings beat Kanoa. Semante Jimenez, Monico Clari-

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Blue Haus, Gilas Batang prevail

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Blue Haus and Gilas Batang earned contrasting victories in the Masters Division games in the United Filipino Organization IT&E 2019 Basketball League.

Gilas Batang entered the win column after dropping its first two matches following a 78-69 triumph over PPG Paint last Thursday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. Blue Haus, on the other hand, notched its fourth straight victory after routing Pacific Marine last Saturday, 122-96.

Blue Haus extended its streak

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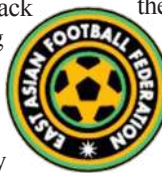
Blue Haus' Errol Peredo unloads a jumper against PPG Paint's Robert Sanciango during an earlier game in the Masters Division of the United Filipino Organization IT&E 2019 Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. Peredo scored 40 points in Blue Haus' 122-96 rout of Pacific Marine last Saturday.



Blue Ayuyus start prep for EAFF tourney

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The islands' players will be back at the NMI Soccer Training Center today to begin their preparations for the EAFF E-1 Men's Football Championship 2021 Preliminary Round 1.



Northern Mariana Islands Football Association technical director and CNMI Men's National Team head coach Michiteru Mita will start the tryouts and training for the Blue Ayuyus who will play in the East Asian Football Federation-sanctioned tournament this year (definite dates and venue will be announced later). Training schedule will be every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, starting at 6pm and on two Saturdays (Jan 11 and 25 at 4pm and 6:30pm, respectively).

Players eligible to join the try-

outs should be competing in the M-League Division A and U19 youth league. Those who have suited up for the CNMI youth and men's teams are encouraged to participate in the tryouts and training, which will be held three times a week once the M-League and 2020 NMIFA Spring Youth League kick off.

Off-island players are also welcome to join the tryout, but they must inform NMIFA of their intent to be part of the national squad by Jan. 31. Off-island players must be currently playing in a soccer club or varsity team and training on a regular basis under a coach. A video of the player's matches (between January to March this year) should also be submitted if he could not make it to the tryouts. Videos must be submitted by March 31.

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EAFF PHOTO

The CNMI's Hark Joshua Galarion, right, is seen here in a file photo taken during the EAFF E-1 Football Championships 2019 Round 1 getting tangled with Guam's Marcus Philip Lopez in the first half of their match at the Mongolian Football Federation Stadium in Ulan Bator.